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BRADBURY SUFFERS HIS WORST CHERRIES DEFEAT

Charlton v Cherries – see page 3

PERFECT START

QUICK OFF THE MARK: Dean Hammond, centre, celebrates after the opening goal.

SAINTS 3 LEEDS UTD 1

SAINTS KICKED-OFF THE NEW CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON IN STUNNING FASHION, THUMPING LEEDS 3-1 AT ST MARY'S.

Goals from skipper Dean Hammond, Adam Lallana and David Connolly made it a wonderful start for Nigel Adkins' men on their return to the second tier.

The only blemish was a Max Gradel penalty right at the death.

The win was Saints' first opening day victory at home since 1988, and anywhere since 1999.

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TERRY PAINE

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LOCAL CRICKET

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Saints Spotlight

SAINTS BACK

Gordon Simpson
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SPORTS REPORTER

SAINTS kicked-off the new Championship season in stunning fashion, thumping Leeds 3-1 at St Mary's this evening.

Goals from skipper Dean Hammond, Adam Lallana and David Connolly made it a wonderful start for Nigel Adkins' men on their return to the second tier.

The only blemish was a Max Gradel penalty right at the death.

The win was Saints' first opening day victory at home since 1988, and anywhere since 1999.

It also marked a seventh consecutive league success, breaking the previous club record of six.

Saints turned in a hugely encouraging performance in front of the live television cameras, dominating the game from start to finish.

David Connolly got the first sniff of goal, latching onto a Rickie Lambert flick-on in the Leeds area, but his volley on the turn was well blocked by Andy O'Brien.

Lambert had a free-kick 25 yards out in the third minute, after Patrick Kisnorbo had scythed down Connolly, but he struck his effort into the wall.

Saints were unhappy with some of the early treatment they were receiving from Leeds, and particularly their ex-Pompey midfielder Michael Brown, who was clattering into a number of challenges.

The visitors went close to breaking the deadlock in the eighth minute, as Ross McCormack nodded Kisnorbo's free-kick into the path of Jonny Howson, but his volley from 18 yards was fortunately straight at Kelvin Davis.

It was a defining stop, as Saints went straight down the other end to take the lead themselves.

Hammond received a pass from Guly do Prado in midfield, drove forward and slammed a low left-foot shot into the bottom corner.

It was a dream start for Adkins' side, and well deserved after the early exchanges.

The goal actually served to settle the game down for a short period, although Saints continued to play the better football.

However, it wasn't long before Leeds started to look a little more threatening.

Creating a real clear-cut chance was proving tough for Simon Grayson's side, though, especially with their first-choice front pairing of Davide Somma and Luciano Becchio out injured.

And they paid the price for their lack of cutting edge, as Saints doubled the lead in the 25th minute.

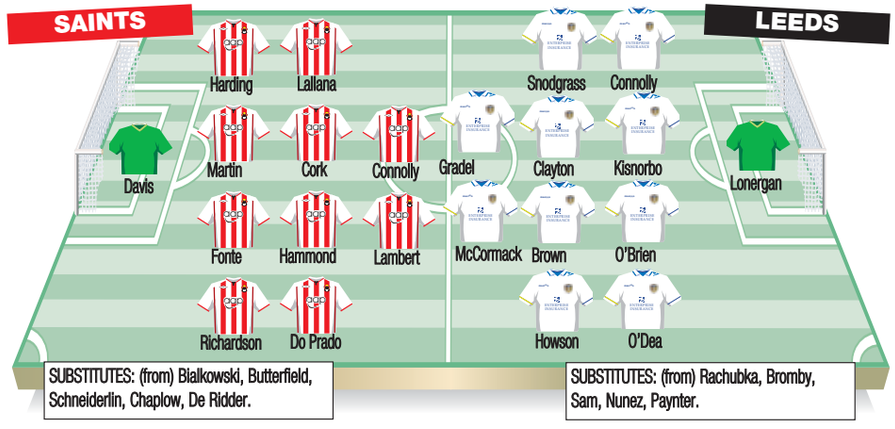
Lambert picked out Lallana's run into the box. The midfielder reached the ball, cut back past O'Brien and placed a beautiful left foot shot in off the far post.

It was nearly 3-0 moments later, as Guly got down the right and fizzed a ball into the path of Lallana, but Andy Lonergan somehow denied him from just a few yards out.

Leeds were understandably frustrated, and it was no surprise that Brown received the first yellow card, for an ill-advised comment to referee Kevin Wright.

By this point, Lallana was pulling plenty of

WONDERLAND: Adam Lallana celebrates with Rickie Lambert after making it 2-0.



TEENAGE winger Alex Chamberlain missed the Championship opener against Leeds after failing to recover from an ankle injury picked up in pre-season.

Striker Lee Barnard also failed to make the 16-man squad, again because of an ankle injury.

Dan Seaborne was expected to start at centre half alongside Jose Fonte, but was not named on the teamsheet.

Neither was veteran defender Radhi Jaidi, meaning former Eastleigh player Aaron Martin was given the nod.

Jack Cork was handed a second Saints debut of his career, while fellow summer signing Steve De Ridder had to settle for a place on the bench.

CHAMPIONSHIP

Boro hit by Luke's leveller

MBORO	2
POMPEY	2

DEBUTANT Luke Varney grabbed an injury-time equaliser as Portsmouth twice came from behind to snatch a point against Middlesbrough at a rain-soaked Riverside Stadium.

Dutch forward Marvin Emnes put Boro ahead midway through the first half, only for David Norris – another Pompey new boy – to level after the break.

Rhys Williams quickly restored the hosts' advantage after being played through by Nicky Bailey, but Boro were unable to find a killer third goal and paid the price when Varney fired home in the second minute of added time.

Pompey will be delighted to have avoided a fourth successive opening-day defeat, having seen their opponents create a string of chances in difficult conditions. Boss Steve Cotterill, pictured, named just four substitutes.

Boro were first to threaten as Barry Robson fired over. Former Middlesbrough loanee Dave Kitson then tested Ikeme at the other end before Robson directed a header straight at Jamie Ashdown.

Tony Mowbray's side took the lead through Emnes, however. Scott McDonald cut the ball back to the Dutchman, who drilled in a low shot.

Emnes shot narrowly wide soon after as the rain grew heavier, while McDonald, Justin Hoyte and Robson also went close as Boro threatened to extend their advantage.

Pompey had a chance to draw level a minute before the break, but Hayden Mullins failed to keep his shot down after good work from Tal Ben-Haim.

It took Portsmouth less than two minutes to level in the second half as Norris beat Ikeme with a powerful 20-yard shot.

But Boro were soon back ahead as Williams collected a glorious through ball from Bailey before finishing coolly.

Cotterill introduced veteran forward Kanu and Ryan Williams, younger brother of Middlesbrough goalscorer Rhys, in a bid to find an equaliser, while Christian Dailly came on with seven minutes remaining.

Emnes almost grabbed his second but Ashdown reacted well to tip his shot over the bar.

Varney then popped up to shock the home support after Dailly's effort had been blocked.

OPENING SATURDAY'S CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS – SEE BACK PAGE

Saints Spotlight

WITH A BANG

strings, and he produced another effort in the 32nd minute, slicing a left foot volley wide from the edge of the area.

Lambert almost dealt a fatal blow a minute before half-time, hitting a ferocious free-kick from 25 yards just wide, after Kisnorbo had been penalised for pulling on the striker's shirt.

That proved to be the last significant action of the first period, with Saints receiving a standing ovation at Wright's whistle.

Leeds looked to respond after the restart, and Gradel nearly got through in the opening seconds, but Aaron Martin flew back to make a last-ditch saving tackle.

Things then got even better for Saints, as Connolly made it 3-0 in the 52nd minute with a superb goal.

His brilliant flick found Lallana in the box. The winger picked out Connolly's resulting run perfectly and the striker slotted the ball into the far corner to send St Mary's wild.

Grayson then tried to shake things up, by swapping Brown for frontman Billy Paynter.

But the only real hope Leeds were clinging to was the memory of their remarkable comeback from 3-0 down to win 4-3 at St Mary's in November 2005.

Paynter should have got a potential repeat underway on the hour mark, as Adam Clayton's ball over the top put him clean through, but Davis got down to make a superb one-on-one stop.

Gradel then fired over from distance, before Leeds hauled off McCormack and replaced him with Ramon Nunez.

Adkins also made his first change of the day, taking off Connolly and introducing Belgian winger Steve De Ridder for his debut in the 62nd minute.

Two minutes later, the Saints boss swapped Guly for tenacious midfielder Richard Chaplow, as the hosts looked to shut the game down.

Gradel appealed for a penalty in the 66th minute, as he dragged the ball past Jack Cork in the box, before tumbling to the floor.

Cork was furious at the ease with which the winger went to ground, and referee Wright shared his scepticism.

Hammond could easily have grabbed his second goal of the day in the 69th minute, winning the race to meet Lallana's near post corner, but the captain headed over.

Clayton was the next Leeds man to go into the book, for hacking down Cork as he looked to power through midfield.

Grayson's last throw of the dice was to substitute Robert Snodgrass for Lloyd Sam in the 73rd minute.

But Saints were refusing to take their foot off the gas, and continued to make life difficult for the away side.

Martin nearly got in on the act in the 75th minute, as he got onto the end of Lallana's devilish deep left-wing cross.

But the defender's downward diving header from six yards somehow bounced high enough to clear the bar.

Adkins made his final change seconds later, removing Hammond to a huge ovation and replacing him with French midfielder Morgan Schneiderlin.

Gradel went into the book five minutes from time for a rash challenge on Saints' left-back Dan Harding.

Chaplow hit a stunning drive from 20 yards out, which Lonergan somehow managed to tip onto the post to prevent further embarrassment.

Leeds did receive a consolation deep into injury time, after Martin was adjudged to have handled in the area, allowing Gradel to convert from the spot, but it did little to spoil a great day for Saints.

BATTLER: Fraser Richardson slides in with a tackle.

DELIGHT: Dean Hammond, whose opening goal got Saints on their way.

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REPORT, PICTURES AND ANALYSIS IN MONDAY'S DAILY ECHO

LEAGUE 1

Bradbury suffers a setback

CHARLTON	3
CHERRIES	0

LEE Bradbury suffered his heaviest defeat as a manager as Cherries were soundly beaten by League One rivals Charlton today.

Bradbury's men toiled for long periods in the first half, with a Dale Stephens goal giving the hosts a deserved half-time lead.

And although Cherries fared slightly better after the break, Scott Wagstaff's stunning volley left them on the back foot as early as the 51st minute.

A forgettable opening-day encounter for the visitors was compounded when Johnnie Jackson confidently despatched a penalty to make it 3-0 after Adam Barrett had tripped Bradley Wright-Phillips.

Cherries boss Bradbury, pictured, who has seen a host of players depart over the summer, handed debuts to new signings Darryl Flahavan, Barrett and Steven Gregory, while loan pair Scott Malone and Nathan Byrne also started.

The Addicks included former Cherries duo Danny Hollands, who received a warm welcome from the travelling supporters, and Rhoys Wiggins, who was booed throughout.

Michael Morrison headed over from a Stephens corner as the hosts created the first scoring chance. A header from Wright-Phillips looped over the crossbar before the same player saw his shot blocked by Flahavan following a mix up in defence.

Charlton led after 23 minutes when Stephens fired home from just inside the boxl.

Cherries were thankful to Flahavan for an acrobatic save from Wiggins.

Harry Arter and Danny Ings were both booked as frustrations mounted in the visitors' ranks.

Lyle Taylor replaced Baudry at the interval, although Charlton quickly doubled their lead when Wagstaff's rasping volley whistled past Flahavan.

Cherries' claims for a penalty fell on dear ears after Taylor had taken a tumble after a challenge from keeper Rob Elliot.

Jackson made no mistake from the spot, drilling home a penalty after Barrett had tripped Wright-Phillips.

Taylor should have at least netted a consolation for Cherries, the striker missing a header after Scott Malone had put the ball on a plate for him.

Championship Spotlight

BARNSLEY

Manager: Keith Hill
Position last season: 17th
Players in: David Perkins (Colchester, free), Craig Davies (Chesterfield, £700,000), Miles Addison (Derby, loan until January), Matt Done (Rochdale, undisclosed), Jim McNulty (Brighton, undisclosed), Scott Wiseman (Rochdale, free), Rob Edwards (Blackpool, free)
Players out: Martin Devaney, Danny Fearnehough, Conor Branson, Steven Bennett (all released), Matthew Hill (Blackpool, free), Liam Dickinson (Plymouth, free) Jason Shackell (Derby, £1million) Hugo Colace (Estudiantes Tecos, free), Kern Miller (Accrington, loan until January)
Key man: Craig Davies
Chances: Keith Hill replaced Mark Robins in June and has rebuilt the squad. Hill's reputation has soared since leading Rochdale to promotion and establishing them as a force in npower League One. But the Tykes are destined for another season of struggle as the Championship gets stronger and stronger.
Prediction: 23rd

BIRMINGHAM

Manager: Chris Hughton
Position last season: 18th in the Premier League
Players in: Chris Burke (Cardiff, free), Marlon King (Coventry, free), Morgaro Gomis (Dundee United, free), Adam Rooney (Inverness, free), Steven Caldwell (Wigan, free), Jonathan Spector (West Ham, free), Boaz Myhill (WBA, loan)
Players out: Kevin Phillips & Barry Ferguson (Blackpool, free), Marcus Bent, Martin Jiranek, Stuart Parnaby (all released), Sebastian Larsson (Sunderland, free), Maik Taylor (retired), Craig Gardner (Sunderland, undisclosed), Lee Bowyer (Ipswich, free), Roger Johnson (Wolves, undisclosed), Ben Foster (WBA, loan)
Key man: Marlon King.
Chances: New boss Chris Hughton knows he faces a tough task clinching an immediate return to the Premier League yet the Blues, who also have the Europa League to contend with as Carling Cup winners, have the knowhow having done it in 2007 and 2009.
Prediction: 3rd

BLACKPOOL

Manager: Ian Holloway
Position last season: 19th in the Premier League
Players in: Bojan Djordjic (Videoton, free), Matthew Hill (Barnsley, free), Kevin Phillips & Barry Ferguson (both Birmingham, free), Craig Sutherland (unattached)
Players out: Danny Coid, Malaury Martin, Jason Euell, David Carney, Salaheddine Sbaï, Richard Kingson, Marlon Harewood (all released), Andy Reid (Nottingham Forest, free), Ishmel Demontagnac (Notts County, free), Paul Rachubka (Leeds, free), David Vaughan (Sunderland, free), Rob Edwards (Barnsley, free), Charlie Adam (Liverpool, £6.75million)
Key man: Kevin Phillips
Chances: The departure of talisman Charlie Adam is a massive loss but Ian Holloway should at least have his side competing at the right end of the table.
Prediction: 12th

BRIGHTON

Manager: Gus Poyet
Position last season: 1st in League One
Players in: Will Hoskins (Bristol Rovers, £500,000), Will Buckley (Watford, £1million), Roland Bergkamp (Excelsior, compensation TBC), Craig Mackail-Smith (Peterborough, £3.25million), Kazenga LuaLua (Newcastle, loan until January), Romain Vincelot (Dagenham, undisclosed)
Players out: Radostin Kishishev, Cristian Baz, Agustin Battipiedi, Fran Sandaza (all released), Glenn Murray (Crystal Palace, free), Chris Holroyd (Rotherham, free), James Tunnicliffe (Wycombe, free), Elliott Bennett (Norwich, £1.5million), Jim McNulty (Barnsley, undisclosed), Gary Hart (Eastbourne Borough, free)
Key man: Craig Mackail-Smith
Chances: Promotion, a new stadium, a bright young manager and some big-money signings mean the feelgood factor is off the scale at the moment and the Seagulls will surprise plenty of teams.
Prediction: 14th

BRISTOL CITY

Manager: Keith Millen
Position last season: 15th
Players in: Yannick Bolasie (Plymouth, £90,000), Ryan Taylor (Rotherham, undisclosed), Neil Kilkenny (Leeds, free)
Players out: Patrick Hoban, Jimmy Keohane (both released) John Akinde (Crawley, £70,000), Ivan Sproule (Hibernian, free), Stephen Henderson (Portsmouth, free)
Key man: Nicky Maynard
Chances: After a good summer of recruitment, and perhaps more importantly fending off interest in Nicky Maynard, Millen will definitely be eyeing an improvement . But with the division even tougher this year, it could be another difficult season for the Robins.
Prediction: 18th

BURNLEY

Manager: Eddie Howe
Position last season: 8th
Players in: Richard Eckersley (Toronto, undisclosed), Ben Mee (Manchester City, season loan), Kieran Trippier (Manchester City, season loan), John Stewart (Bournemouth, free), Keith Treacy (Preston, free).
Players out: Kevin McDonald, Chris Lynch, Nik Kudiersky, Chris Anderson, Michael John King, Remco van der Schaaf, Graham Alexander (all released), Steven Thompson (St Mirren, free), Clarke Carlisle (Preston, season loan), Chris Iwelumo (Watford, undisclosed), Chris Eagles, Tyrone Mears (both Bolton, undisclosed).
Key man: Charlie Austin
Chances: Struggled for consistency last season but boss Eddie Howe gradually imposed his youthful energy on his players and they only just missed out on the play-offs. Could find life tougher this term.
Prediction: 10th

CARDIFF

Manager: Malky Mackay
Position last season: 4th
Players in: Craig Conway (Dundee United, free), Don Cowie (Watford, free), Andrew Taylor (Middlesbrough, free), Robert Earnshaw (Nottingham Forest, free), Aron Gunnarsson (Coventry, free), Joe Mason (Plymouth, undisclosed), Kenny Miller (Bursaspor, £870,000)
Players out: Gavin Rae, Martin John (both released), Chris Burke (Birmingham, free) Adam Matthews (Celtic, £200,000), Michael Chopra (Ipswich, £1.5million), Jay Bothroyd (QPR, free)
Key man: Peter Whittingham
Chances: It has been a summer of upheaval for Cardiff, sacking manager Dave Jones and a host of key players including Craig Bellamy and Jay Bothroyd, so an automatic promotion campaign could be beyond them. However, Mackay is a promising young manager and has recruited well.
Prediction: 7th

COVENTRY

Manager: Andy Thorn
Position last season: 18th
Players in: Chris Dunn (Northampton, undisclosed), Joe Murphy (Scunthorpe, free)
Players out: Michael McIndoe, Michael Quirke, Isaac Osbourne (all released), Marlon King (Birmingham, free), Stephen O'Halloran (Carlisle, free), Keiren Westwood (Sunderland, free), Lee Carsley (retired), Aron Gunnarsson (Cardiff, free)
Key man: Ben Turner
Chances: Thorn embarks on his first full season in management and it may be a tough one having lost King, Westwood and Gunnarsson as well as the retirement of Carsley.
Prediction: 20th

Sven in the spotlight

SVEN-GORAN Eriksson has grown accustomed to life in the media spotlight, which is perhaps just as well given the scrutiny he will find himself under this season.

The former England boss, 63, is charged with guiding Leicester into the promised land of the Premier League after an eight-year absence, ***writes Ross Heppenstal.***

After a huge summer outlay of around £10million, the Foxes hierarchy want promotion – and nothing less will do.

The Swede steered the club to a respectable 10th-placed finish last term and has spent the summer assembling a squad capable of lasting the distance in the 46-match marathon that lies ahead in the Championship.

Lee Peltier, Neil Danns, Kasper Schmeichel, Sean St Ledger, David Nugent, Paul Konchesky and Matt Mills have all arrived at the King Power Stadium.

The Foxes, owned by Thai businessman Vichai Raksriaksorn, have paid substantial transfer fees and enticed their new recruits with huge salaries, yet Nugent could prove their shrewdest acquisition.

The 26-year-old, who won his only England cap in 2007, arrived on a free transfer at the end of June after four years at Portsmouth.

Leicester's ambition is clear but the fight for promotion looks set to be more fiercely contested than ever.

West Ham are under pressure to bounce straight back from last season's relegation.

Hammers boss Sam Allardyce, who guided Bolton into the top flight in 2001, has seen players leave but Kevin Nolan's £5million arrival from Newcastle on a five-year contract said much for the club's desire to return to the elite at the first attempt.

Nolan was central to Allardyce's success at Bolton and, now reunited at Upton Park, they could prove an ominous force.

Birmingham, relegated on the final day of last season, are also expected to be in the mix for a top-two finish.

New boss Chris Hughton has brought in Chris Burke and Marlon King on free transfers but key men such as Roger Johnson and Craig Gardner have jumped ship.

Perhaps Nottingham Forest can have a greater say in the promotion race after two years of play-off heartache.

Steve McClaren lacks nothing in ambition and the return of former favourite Andy Reid could prove a significant addition to a youthful squad.

Middlesbrough look set to compete alongside the likes of Reading and Cardiff for a play-off berth.

Blackpool boss Ian Holloway won many admirers last season and will hope to challenge for an immediate return to the Premier despite the loss of talismanic skipper Charlie Adam.

Paul Jewell's reputation took a severe battering at Derby and prized asset Connor Wickham was sold to Sunderland, yet Ipswich look primed to launch a credible challenge.

Jewell has recruited Lee

CRYSTAL PALACE

Manager: Dougie Freedman
Position last season: 20th
Players in: Glenn Murray (Brighton, free), Kagisho Dikgacoi (Fulham, undisclosed), Mile Jedinak (Genclerbirligi, free), Jonathan Parr (Aalesund, undisclosed).
Players out: Claude Davis, Kieran Djilali (both released), Neil Danns (Leicester, free), Adam Barrett (Bournemouth, undisclosed), Alassane N'Diaye (Southend, season loan)
Key man: Julian Speroni
Chances: Have narrowly avoided relegation in the past two seasons and there is little hope of that changing. Losing key midfielder Neil Danns was a big blow.
Prediction: 21st

DERBY

Manager: Nigel Clough
Position last season: 19th
Players in: Frank Fielding (Blackburn, £300,000), Jamie Ward (Sheffield United, £600,000), Theo Robinson (Millwall, undisclosed), Craig Bryson (Kilmarnock, £500,000), Nathan Tyson (Nottingham Forest, free), Jason Shackell (Barnsley, £1million), Chris Maguire (Aberdeen, free), Adam Legzdins (Burton, undisclosed), Kevin Kilbane (Hull, loan)
Players out: Chris Porter (Sheffield United, free), Greg Mills (released), Arnaud Mendy (Macclesfield, free), Robbie Savage (retired), Ben Pringle (Rotherham, free), Miles Addison (Barnsley, loan until January), Luke Varney (Portsmouth, undisclosed), Ross Atkins (Burton, loan)
Key man: Shaun Barker
Chances: A busy summer in the transfer market could finally have given manager Nigel Clough a squad capable of a top-10 finish. If they can gel quickly and avoid the injury problems that have blighted the past two campaigns, a play-off challenge could be a possibility, but they may be sucked into the mid-table morass.
Prediction: 16th

DONCASTER

Manager: Sean O'Driscoll
Position last season: 21st
Players in: Tommy Spurr (Sheffield Wednesday, £200,000), Kyle Bennett (Bury, undisclosed), James Baxendale (Leeds, free), Richard Naylor (Leeds, free), Chris Brown (Preston, free)
Players out: Wayne Thomas, Dennis Souza, Steve Brooker (all released), Byron Webster (Northampton, free), Ryan Burge (Port Vale, free), Waide Fairhurst (Macclesfield, undisclosed)
Key man: Chris Brown
Chances: Doncaster struggled badly last season and at one point looked in serious danger of going down. They did enough to survive the drop but may not have enough quality to do so again this term.
Prediction: 24th

HULL

Manager: Nigel Pearson
Position last season: 11th
Players in: Joe Dudgeon (Manchester United, £80,000), Corry Evans (Manchester United, £500,000), Dele Adebola (Nottingham Forest, free), Jack Hobbs (Leicester, undisclosed), Paul

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Championship Spotlight

USED TO BEING IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Sven-Goran Eriksson chats to Jose Mourinho before last weekend's Leicester v Real Madrid friendly.

Forest could be tougher than England

IT might appear a strange statement to make about someone who has taken charge of his country, but the Nottingham Forest job could prove to be the most challenging of Steve McClaren's managerial career.

Forest are no ordinary club.

The aura of the legendary Brian Clough still lingers around the corridors at the City Ground.

Reminders of his legacy are everywhere. Two replica European Cups glisten in the trophy room, while a photograph of Clough pouring champagne into the real thing adorns the wall.

Ten managers have come and gone since the day in 1993 that Clough finally left the club but perhaps the long shadow he casts is even more pertinent given the parallels to be drawn with the 11th man to try and bring success back to Forest.

Two decades ago Forest still had Clough – the greatest manager England never had.

Now they have McClaren, who has already had the England job but whose career was very nearly destroyed by the experience.

Like Clough, McClaren takes over Forest with the club in the second tier. And like Clough, who came to Forest fresh from his failure with Leeds, McClaren arrives at the City Ground in the knowledge that, in this country at least, he too has a reputation to rebuild.

But while McClaren acknowledges the size of the task at hand, he feels he has nothing to prove on his return to these shores following spells in charge of Dutch club FC Twente and Wolfsburg of Germany.

"I was successful before I took the England job, being part of a hugely successful spell at Manchester United (as assistant to Sir Alex Ferguson) and winning the League Cup with Middlesbrough and getting them to a UEFA Cup final, and I have had success after the England job by winning the Eredivisie title with Twente," said McClaren.

"I don't feel I have anything to prove. Sometimes you take chances and sometimes it doesn't work out but I believe you become better for those experiences.

"And I will need to have learned from them because this is a huge club steeped in history and heritage. It should be in the Premier League and that is where I will try to take it."

McClaren added: "I was a player during the Clough era and he had an aura about him.

"You can still smell the history and achievement around the club today. They used to say Notts County were on an equal level (with Forest) before Cloughie. What he did here shows what can be achieved.

"I can't be frightened or intimidated by that – I have to embrace it all.

"What we have to bring is a modern era and culture and try to create a new team and take small steps to trying to achieve something."

STEVE McCLAREN

Forest fans could be forgiven for thinking they have heard all this honouring-the-past before, but they have not had a manager since Clough who can claim to having won a European league title.

McClaren concluded: "Taking everything into consideration, getting Nottingham Forest into the Premier League could prove to be right up there as one of my biggest challenges. But I don't fear it.

"I had no hesitation about managing in the Championship, it's very competitive and very well respected abroad. But it is not a division we want to be in for too long."

Bowyer, Michael Chopra and a host of other squad players.

Brighton have a new stadium and a bright young boss in Gus Poyet, so expect the feelgood factor to keep them well afloat.

Burnley and Leeds fell just short of the play-offs last term and neither side looks likely to trouble the leading contenders this time around.

Palace, Barnsley, Doncaster, Coventry and Peterborough should be down around the bottom.

McKenna (Nottingham Forest, free), Peter Gulacsi (Liverpool, season loan)
Players out: Matt Duke, Craig Fagan, Anthony Gardner, Tijani Belaid (all released), Nolberto Solano (Hartlepool, free), Liam Cooper (Huddersfield, season loan), Kevin Kilbane (Derby, loan).
Key man: Matty Fryatt
Chances: The Tigers struggled to make an impact back in the Championship under new manager Pearson last season following relegation. But they set a new unbeaten away record of 14 matches and, if they can improve their home form, Hull – boosted by six new signings – can launch a concerted play-off challenge.
Prediction: 13th

IPSWICH

Manager: Paul Jewell
Position last season: 13th
Players in: Ivar Ingimarsson (Reading, free), Nathan Ellington (Watford, free), Michael Chopra (Cardiff, £1.5million), Aaron Cresswell (Tranmere, tribunal), Lee Bowyer (Birmingham, free), David Stockdale (Fulham, season loan), Jay Emmanuel-Thomas (Arsenal, undisclosed)
Players out: Pablo Counago (released), Kevin Lisbie (released), Ian McLoughlin (MK Dons, free), Brian Murphy, Alan Quinn, Reggie Lambe, David Cawley (all released), Gareth McAuley (West Brom, free), David Norris (Portsmouth, free), Tom Eastman (Colchester, free), Troy Brown (Rotherham, free), Connor Wickham (Sunderland, £8million)
Key man: Michael Chopra
Chances: Despite losing Wickham, McAuley and Norris, experienced manager Jewell has brought in the likes of Chopra, Ingimarsson and Bowyer to steady the ship in what represents a season of promise at Portman Road.
Prediction: 9th

LEEDS

Manager: Simon Grayson
Position last season: 7th
Players in: Paul Rachubka (Blackpool, free), Michael Brown (Portsmouth, free), Andy Lonergan (Preston, undisclosed)
Players out: Richard Naylor, Shane Higgs (both released), Neil Kilkenny (Bristol City, free), Kasper Schmeichel (Leicester, £1.5million), Bradley Johnson (Norwich, free), James Baxendale (Doncaster, free)
Key man: Max Gradel
Chances: Grayson is doubly determined to steer Leeds towards another promotion challenge after narrowly missing out on the play-offs last season. But following a summer of limited rebuilding a top-six finish might be beyond them.
Prediction: 11th

LEICESTER

Manager: Sven-Goran Eriksson
Position last season: 10th
Players in: Lee Peltier (Huddersfield, £700,000), Neil Danns (Crystal Palace, free), Kasper Schmeichel (Leeds, £1.5million), Sean St Ledger (Preston, undisclosed), David Nugent (Portsmouth, free), Matt Mills (Reading, undisclosed), John Pantsil (Fulham, free), Michael Johnson (Manchester City, season loan)
Players out: Ricardo, Robert Ambrusics, Ashley Chambers, Nathan Hicks, Jorrin John, Ben Milnes, Luke O'Neill, Aman Verma, Adi Yussuf (all released), Craig King (Telford, free), Michael Lamey (Wisla Krakow, free), Jack Hobbs (Hull, undisclosed), Cian Bolger (Bristol Rovers, six-month loan), Conrad Logan (Rotherham, six-month loan)
Key man: Darius Vassell
Chances: After an influx of new signings, Sven-Goran Eriksson's first full season in charge is expected to be a successful one. Anything less than promotion would be seen as failure but a top-two finish must be the aim.
Prediction: 1st

MIDDLESBROUGH

Manager: Tony Mowbray
Position last season: 12th
Players in: Curtis Main (Darlington, free)
Players out: Maximilian Haas (released), Willo Flood (Dundee United, free), Kris Boyd (Eskisehirspor, free), Andrew Taylor (Cardiff, free), Leroy Lita (Swansea, £1.75m), Ben Gibson (Plymouth, loan).
Key man: Scott McDonald
Chances: After a strong finish to last season, Boro will be seeking to make a serious promotion push in Mowbray's first full season in charge. A mixture of youth and experience can lead the club to a play-off place.
Prediction: 6th

MILLWALL

Manager: Kenny Jackett
Position last season: 9th
Players in: Ryan Allsop (West Brom, £80,000), Therry Racon (Charlton, free), Hameur Bouazza (Arles-Avignon, £175,000), Darius Henderson (Sheffield United, undisclosed), Jordan Stewart (Skoda Xanthi, free)
Players out: Patrick O'Connor, Kiernon Hughes-Mason (both released), Marc Laird (Leyton Orient, free), John Sullivan (Charlton, free), Steve Morison (Norwich, £2.5million), Theo Robinson (Derby, undisclosed), Neil Harris (Southend, free), Ashley Grimes (Rochdale, free), Andy Frampton (Gillingham, free), Danny Schofield (Rotherham, free)
Key man: Paul Robinson
Chances: Steve Morison's 15 goals guided the Lions to the fringes of the play-offs last term, but also earned him a move to Norwich. He will be difficult to replace.
Prediction: 17th

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Manager: Steve McClaren
Position last season: 6th
Players in: Andy Reid (Blackpool, free), Jonathan Greening (Fulham, undisclosed), George Boateng (unattached)
Players out: Nathan Tyson (Derby, free), Mark Byrne (Barnet, free), Kelvin Wilson (Celtic, free), Dele Adebola (Hull, free), Paul McKenna (Hull, free), Julian Bennett (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Robert Earnshaw (Cardiff, free)
Key man: Luke Chambers
Chances: It was play-off heartbreak again for Forest last season but a new manager and a shake-up of the squad could be what is needed for them to make that final step. It will be the play-offs again, but McClaren might be celebrating at Wembley come May.
Prediction: 4th

PETERBOROUGH

Manager: Darren Ferguson
Position last season: 4th in League One
Players in: Paul Jones (Exeter, free), Ryan Tunnicliffe (Manchester United, six-month loan), Scott Wootton (Manchester United, six-month loan)
Players out: James McKeown (released), Seth Nana Ofori-Twumasi (Northampton, free), Chris Whelpdale (Gillingham, free), Craig Mackail-Smith (Brighton, £3.25million)
Key man: George Boyd
Chances: Posh struggled at this level last time they were promoted and it will be tough for them again. Mackail-Smith's goals will be hard to replace.
Prediction: 22nd

PORTSMOUTH

Manager: Steve Cotterill
Position last season: 16th
Players in: David Norris (Ipswich, free), Jason Pearce (Bournemouth, undisclosed), Luke Varney (Derby, undisclosed), Stephen Henderson (Bristol City, free)
Players out: Michael Brown, Richard Hughes, Danny Webber (all released), Marlon Pack (Cheltenham, free), Nadir Ciftci (Kayserispor, free), Darryl Flahavan (Bournemouth, free), David Nugent (Leicester, free)
Key man: David Norris
Chances: Cotterill worked miracles with a threadbare squad last term, with Pompey at one stage even threatening to make the play-offs. A few more players should ensure a more comfortable season.
Prediction: 14th

READING

Manager: Brian McDermott
Position last season: 5th
Players in: Mikele Leigertwood (QPR, free), Bongani Khumalo (Tottenham, season loan)
Players out: Ben Hamer (Charlton, undisclosed), Ethan Gage, Abdulai Bell-Baggie, Danny Joyce (all released), Scott Davies (Crawley, free), Julian Kelly (Notts County, free), Ivar Ingimarsson (Ipswich, free), Matt Mills (Leicester, undisclosed), David Mooney (Leyton Orient, free), Nicholas Bignall (Exeter, loan), Jake Taylor (Aldershot, loan).
Key man: Shane Long
Chances: Keeping Long has been as big a boost as any new signing and his goals will be again vital as McDermott's side attempt to bounce back from a play-off final defeat last season by once again mounting a promotion challenge.
Prediction: 5th

SAINTS

Manager: Nigel Adkins
Position last season: 2nd in League One
Players in: Jack Cork (Chelsea, undisclosed), Steve de Ridder (De Graafschap, undisclosed)
Players out: Anthony Pulis (Aldershot, free), Tony Garrod (released), Callum McNish (Exeter, free), Oscar Gobern (Huddersfield, tribunal)
Key man: Rickie Lambert
Chances: There is talk of back-to-back promotions at St Mary's, and if the prolific Lambert can step up a level, a play-off challenge will certainly be on the cards.
Prediction: 8th

WATFORD

Manager: Sean Dyche
Position last season: 14th
Players in: Craig Forsyth (Dundee, undisclosed), David Mirfin (Scunthorpe, free), Mark Yeates (Sheffield United, undisclosed), Prince Buaben (Dundee United, free), Chris Iwelumo (Burnley, undisclosed), Carl Dickenson (Stoke, undisclosed)
Players out: Danny Graham (Swansea, £3.5million), Will Buckley (Brighton, £1million), Liam Henderson (York, free), Mat Sadler (Walsall, free), Nathan Ellington (Ipswich, free), Don Cowie (Cardiff, free)
Key man: John Eustace
Chances: It's a journey into the unknown for Watford as Dyche embarks on his first venture into management, and does so without the services of 24-goal top scorer Danny Graham.
Prediction: 19th

WEST HAM

Manager: Sam Allardyce
Position last season: 20th in Premier League
Players in: Abdoulaye Faye (Stoke, free), Kevin Nolan (Newcastle, undisclosed), Matt Taylor (Bolton, undisclosed), Joey O'Brien (Bolton, free)
Players out: Danny Gabbidon (QPR, free), Matthew Upson, Lars Jacobsen, Zavon Hines (all released), Manuel Da Costa (Lokomotiv Moscow, £1.3million), Radoslav Kovac (Basle, £500,000), Demba Ba (Newcastle, undisclosed), Kieron Dyer (QPR, free), Anthony Edgar (Yeovil, free), Jonathan Spector (Birmingham, free),
Key man: Kevin Nolan
Chances: The Hammers were a shambles last season but in Allardyce they have recruited the ideal man to shake them up and, ultimately, guide them straight back up.
Prediction: 2nd
Compiled by the Press Association.

SAINTS 2011/12 FIXTURES

August

6 Leeds .....(H)
13 Barnsley ..... (A)
16 Ipswich .....(A)
20 Millwall ..... (H)
27 Leicester .....(A)

September

10 Nottm Forest .....(H)
17 Birmingham .....(H)
24 Burnley ..... (A)
27 Cardiff ..... (A)

October

1 Watford ..... (H)
15 Derby ..... (A)
18 West Ham .....(H)
22 Reading ..... (A)
29 Middlesbrough .....(H)

November

1 Peterborough ..... (H)
5 Coventry ..... (A)
19 Brighton ..... (H)
26 Bristol City ..... (A)
29 Hull ..... (H)

December

3 Doncaster ..... (A)
10 Blackpool ..... (H)
17 Portsmouth ..... (A)
26 Crystal Palace ..... (H)
31 Bristol City .....(H)

January

2 Brighton ..... (A)
14 Nottm Forest ..... (A)
21 Leicester ..... (H)
31 Cardiff .....(H)

February

4 Birmingham ..... (A)
11 Burnley .....(H)
14 West Ham ..... (A)
18 Derby ..... (H)
25 Watford ..... (A)

March

3 Leeds ..... (A)
6 Ipswich ..... (H)
10 Barnsley ..... (H)
17 Millwall ..... (A)
20 Hull ..... (A)
24 Doncaster .....(H)
31 Blackpool ..... (A)

April

7 Portsmouth ..... (H)
9 Crystal Palace .....(A)
14 Reading ..... (H)
17 Peterborough ..... (A)
21 Middlesbrough ..... (A)
28 Coventry .....(H)

AROUND THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Claret woe for Pearson

BLACKPOOL boss Ian Holloway hailed Gary Taylor-Fletcher's brilliant winner at Hull in Friday night's season curtain-raiser as proof his side can still be a force in the npower Championship despite the loss of Charlie Adam and DJ Campbell.

Taylor-Fletcher, who scored the Seasiders' first Premier League goal on the opening day of last season, lashed home a glorious angled effort nine minutes from time to settle an open game 1-0 at the KC Stadium.

Blackpool have seen their two most impressive players last term, playmaker Adam and striker Campbell, leave for Liverpool and QPR respectively this summer, but showed plenty of resilience to keep out a Hull side who were made to pay for a host of missed chances.

"It's not all doom and gloom, not at all," Holloway said on Sky Sports. "Let's see what we can do, everybody's written us off again.

"Taylor-Fletcher is just a brilliant footballer, he's got such happy feet. At this level you need that little bit of fantastic skill. He's a wonderful lad, great player.

"To think he started in non-league, he's ended up playing in the top flight and you can see he wants to get back there. If someone hasn't taken him now then I'm lucky because he's with me.

"I want to prove that it's not just the players we've lost that were good. I want these lads to shine again and for me they did tonight in a very tough fixture."

Blackpool debutant Kevin Phillips, 38 years old but still a handful, almost scored. The ex-Saint fired a fierce shot which had goalkeeper Peter Gulacsi beaten but hit the post.

DISAPPOINTMENT: Nigel Pearson.

Hull had enough chances to earn at least a point in the second half.

Matt Fryatt was sent clean through, but a heavy touch allowed Matt Gilks to smother his shot and Nick Barmby curled the rebound over the bar, while Robbie Brady, who was causing all sorts of problems with his pace down the wings, pulled back a low cross for Cairney, who was denied by an excellent block by Craig Cathcart.

Substitute Jay Simpson should have equalised in the dying moments when a long ball found him in space with the goal at his mercy, but he shot horribly over.

Holloway added: "I think that's a rude awakening for all of us. You muck and mess about in the Premier League and think it's lovely stuff. They give you a little bit of time on the ball and they all back off a little bit.

"Now it's hurly burly, but I'm delighted for the lads, we've had a tough few weeks and it's always about getting the game started. We've had a terrible pre-season, we haven't played well at all, but we have tonight so that's all that matters."

Ex-Saints boss Nigel Pearson felt his Hull side deserved better, but admitted they had to take their chances.

"To be fair to them they defended well when they had to," he said. "I feel we've been mugged a bit tonight because of the number of chances we've made. We should be taking them but that's the Championship for you. It's a steep learning curve for some of our lads. It's a disappointing start of course because, the pre-season having gone as well as it's gone, it would have been nice to get off to a winning start."

Hammers hang on to their stars

SAM Allardyce insists West Ham's England internationals remain firmly committed to the club despite starting the season in the npower Championship.

But the former Blackburn boss admits his side will need to rediscover a winning mentality and quickly if they are to win an instant return to the Barclays Premier League.

Allardyce took charge of his first match when Cardiff visited Upton Park today, with goalkeeper Robert Green, midfielder Scott Parker and striker Carlton Cole all set to feature.

"They are West Ham players and they are contracted to West Ham," he told a press conference.

"Their commitment has to be to the West Ham shirt because that is where their contract lies. I will absolutely field my strongest side and try and start how we mean to go on."

Asked if the trio were less determined to leave than before he arrived, Allardyce said: "I hope so, I hope all the players are enjoying their training and looking forward to a new season.

CLASS ACT: Scott Parker takes on Sunderland.

"There is not a lot to tell the players here about their ability, it is how they use it and how they focus as a team to get results.

"There is a lot of Premier League experience, but it is a different style in the Championship and it's a longer season."

The Hammers lost 19 league games last season, winning just seven, as they finished bottom of the Premier League table and Allardyce acknowledges the mentality of the players is a concern.

"I have come here to be successful, to try and get the club back in the Premier League," he added.

"There are some difficult teams and very good managers in this division. Big money has been spent by a lot to try and get up so we are going to have to be right on song, consistently over 46 matches.

"If I have a concern it is that this club hasn't had a winning mentality.

"It is a hugely difficult weekend. I am not really comfortable yet with the psyche of the side and how they play. I am working out day by day what the mentality of the players is and what makes them tick. That is an ongoing process."

Cardiff, who were beaten in the play-off semi-finals last term, also had a new man at the helm in Malky Mackay, recruited from Watford.

And Mackay sees West Ham, who have brought in Kevin Nolan and Matt Taylor among others, as favourites to win promotion.

"They are obviously seen as a Premier League-type club," he said on the club website.

"They have been able to go out and spend substantial amounts on certain players and there's an experience among their squad.

"You've got England internationals playing there at the moment, still at the club, so they will be one of the favourites for the division, but you've got to play them some time."

Birmingham act to ease injury crisis

BIRMINGHAM have signed striker Chris Wood from West Brom on a month-long youth loan, with a view to an extension.

The 19-year-old went straight into Blues' squad for their Championship opener at Derby with Cameron Jerome, Nikola Zigic and Marlon King all missing through injury.

The duration of Wood's initial stay at St Andrew's means he will also be available for the subsequent league matches against Coventry, Middlesbrough and Watford, as well as the club's two-legged Europa League play-off tie against Portuguese side Nacional.

KING

Wood, who represented New Zealand at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, has risen through the ranks at The Hawthorns and enjoyed a short loan spell at Barnsley last season before then moving to Brighton, where he netted nine times as he helped the Seagulls clinch the League One title.

Burnley defender Kevin Long has joined Accrington on loan.

The Irishman will stay at the Crown Ground until January after enjoying a similar spell with Stanley last season.

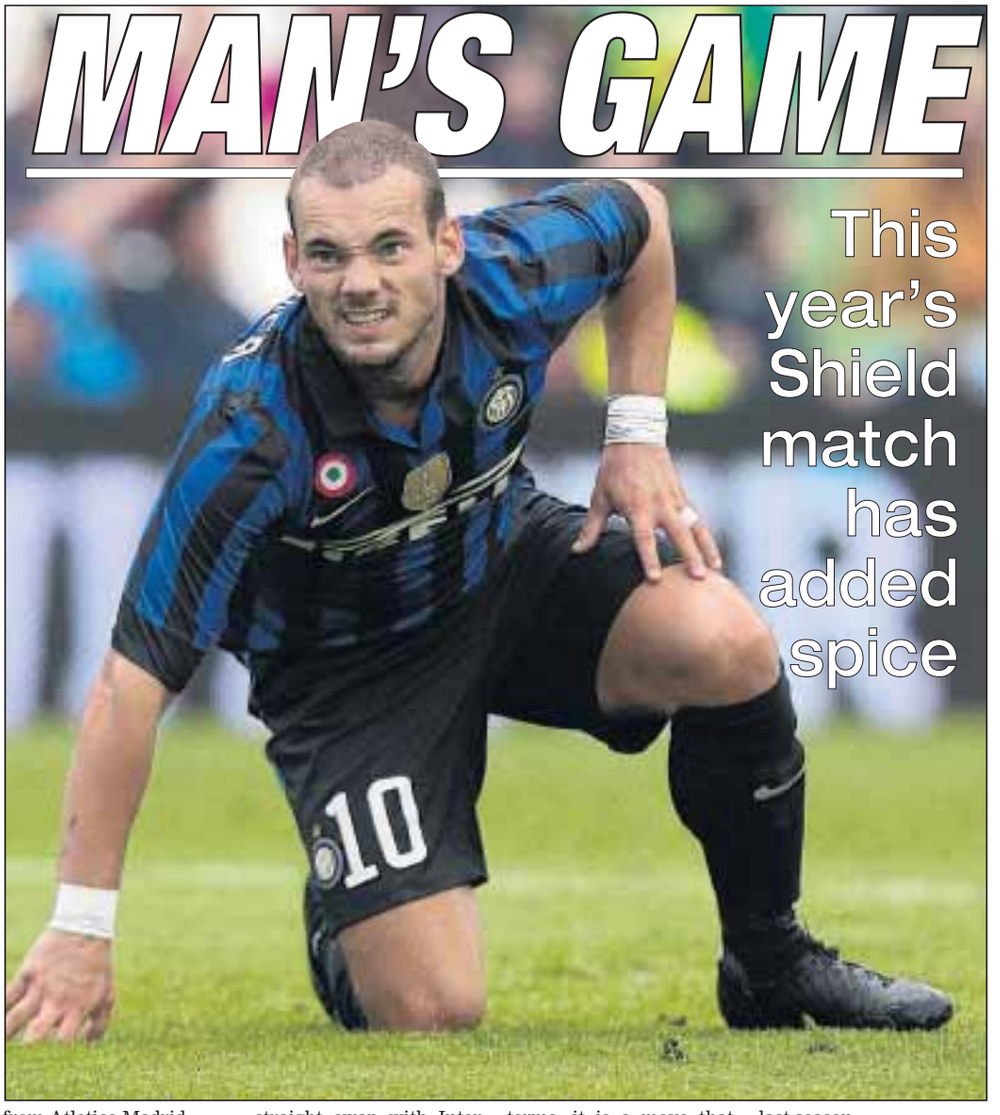
"I'm feeling good about being back," he said. "Obviously with the five subs rule coming into the Football League it's going to be hard to get into the team at Burnley."

TODAY'S CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS - SEE PAGE 48

Paine's World

The Saints legend's EXCLUSIVE column on all things football

MAN'S GAME



This year's Shield match has added spice

THEY can no longer be ignored as just noisy neighbours.

Manchester City are now the "thorn in our flesh", so says Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson.

I fully endorse those sentiments, as I believe that City are a major threat to United's chances of retaining the Premier League title.

Manchester United are a team in transition at the moment.

The changing face of their squad has been quite dramatic.

Gone are the stalwarts of seasons past, due to transfers and retirements.

In fact, I would have to say that United's squad looks a trifle bare right now.

Of course, Ferguson is well known for his ability to create a new team.

The inclusion of Ashley Young, Phil Jones and keeper David de Gea certainly gives the Red Devils a younger, fresher look, but they are maybe lacking the necessary experience of previous seasons.

Ferguson no doubt is energised by the prospect of a new era and team at Old Trafford as he approaches his 25th anniversary at the club in November.

The United manager has made it quite clear that Wayne Rooney will not be used to fill the void left by the retiring Paul Scholes.

If this is the case, where does the manager go and what are the possibilities of bringing in a top-class replacement?

Dutch player Wesley Sneijder, of Inter Milan, appears to be high on the list, but my information is that there is more baggage attached to this player than meets the eye.

The suggestions are that there is a touch of the David Beckhams about his lifestyle.

His wife, I am led to believe, is a television presenter in Los Angeles and is itching to come to England and work in the media.

Plus Sneijder likes the catwalk as well and is projected as a top model.

I am not sure if Sir Alex could handle another showbiz celebrity among his squad.

Although, to excuse the pun, it would certainly spice things up a bit.

Manchester City, United's opponents in this weekend's Community Shield, have plunged into the transfer market to bring on board the 23-year-old Sergio Aguero from Atletico Madrid.

This son-in-law of Diego Maradona was playing in the Argentine first division at the age of 15.

He is a player of huge potential, whose stocky build and burst of acceleration allow him to be very effective in tight situations.

The question is, who will he be partnering up front?

At Atletico Madrid, he often played ahead of Diego Forlan, but perhaps a more suitable position will be tucked in behind a central striker.

As yet, City have not managed to solve the Carlos Tevez problem. Is he going or staying?

Current reports suggest that manager Roberto Mancini is trying to convince his board that a straight swap with Inter Milan for their striker, Samuel Eto'o, is the way forward.

But I see that as difficult proposition.

Why would City let Tevez go for a player who is 30-years-old, with no Premier League experience and very little sell-on value?

In business terms, it is a move that doesn't add up.

I sense Mancini is becoming frustrated with the Tevez situation, and it is clear to me that he no longer wants him at the club.

The same could also be said of Emmanuel Adebayor, Craig Bellamy and our old boy Wayne Bridge.

Having too many unsettled players in one dressing room is asking for trouble.

They need to be cleared out before the season starts, because I believe Manchester City have a strong, physical squad that can improve on the FA Cup victory and Champions League place that they secured last season.

If Mancini can properly handle players such as the volatile Mario Balotelli and get the best out of Edin Dzeko, who looked sharp in pre-season, then I have no doubt that City will have the squad and depth to improve on last season and push United all the way.

A real taste of things to come will be at the Community Shield tomorrow.

The annual charity event at the new Wembley Stadium is often a tepid affair, with neither side wanting to get too involved.

But we can forget that scenario this year, as both managers will be wanting to get in the first blow in their quest to become the dominant force in Manchester for the coming season.

NEW BLOOD: Ashley Young has moved from Aston Villa to Manchester United.

Joker in the pack at United

MANCHESTER United's unsuspecting players have been warned. Sir Alex Ferguson has signed another joker in the pack in the form of Ashley Young.

Rio Ferdinand and Wayne Rooney are the leading dressing room pranksters following the retirement of Paul Scholes.

Young knows both men from their time together with England, and the winger is confident he will hold his own once he gets used to his new surroundings.

"I am pretty lively and quite loud," Young told Inside United.

"When you come to a new club it takes a little while for you to work out how things are but I am a bit of a joker around the dressing room."

Young first became aware of United's interest in January and despite competing offers from Liverpool amongst others, never had any doubt Old Trafford was where he would end up.

"At the time, we were in a bit of a sticky situation at Villa and in a battle to stay up so the clubs said they would talk again during the summer and see where things were," said Young.

FERGUSON

"There were other clubs interested but as soon as I heard about United, I just wanted to sign. I knew it was the right club."

His preferred choice of career path was reinforced by Ferdinand and Rooney while they were away with England.

For a player who has never lacked confidence in his own ability to make an impact at the highest level, the words merely confirmed what he already felt and assured completion of Young's transition from Watford.

"I did speak with them," he said of those international chats. When you are away with England, you always talk about life at your club.

"Everything I heard about United was fantastic. The lads told me how much I would enjoy playing here. I have always had confidence in myself and believed I could play at the highest level. Some people said I couldn't, but they also said I couldn't play for England so that didn't bother me."

Indeed, Young claims to be nerveless about the whole venture, apart from his first meeting with Sir Alex Ferguson that is, when his likely position was not mentioned.

"I am not normally someone who gets nervous but I was this time," he laughed. "As soon as I met him though, my nerves disappeared. He used the word challenge a lot. That is something I have done throughout my career."

Saints Spotlight

THE Sports Pink asked a selection of journalists who cover the leading clubs in the Championship how they think their clubs will fare in 2010/11

BURNLEY

Burnley are experiencing a period of transition going into the new season.

It's not just a case of out with the old and in with the new, but in with the young as manager Eddie Howe set about lowering the average age of the squad by allowing a number of experienced professionals to move on, including 1,000-game man Graham Alexander.

Howe is looking to rebuild, but he will have his work cut after preparations for the new season last week suffered a setback as key players Chris Eagles and Tyrone Mears completed a joint £3m move to Bolton in the final year of their Turf Moor contracts.

There hasn't been much in the way of new faces to replace the departures so far, and Howe is still waiting to make his first permanent summer signing.

Yet while he is constantly monitoring the transfer market, he is equally mindful of using their in-house assets, so fans can expect to see more of their youth team products blooded this season and follow in the footsteps of Jay Rodriguez and Chris McCann, who signed a new two-year contract this summer.

NOT MANY NEW FACES: Burnley boss Eddie Howe.

The Clarets are also ready to welcome back fit-again striker Martin Paterson, who is wanted by Portsmouth.

Burnley are keen to hang on to their 19-goal man from their 2008/09 promotion season and have already rejected several bids from the south coast club to keep top six ambitions intact.

Suzanne Geldard, Lancashire Telegraph

WEST HAM UNITED

West Ham are one of the favourites for the title and will be expected to mount a strong bid for an immediate return to the Premier League.

The Hammers have a new manager after Sam Allardyce replaced Avram Grant following their relegation last season.

He has managed to keep hold of his biggest assets, Scott Parker, Robert Green and Carlton Cole so far but is still expected to lose some of them before the end of the August transfer window.

The signings of Kevin Nolan and Matt Taylor, who both agreed to drop down to the Championship, has increased optimism about their chances of promotion.

Simon Mail, East London Gazette

BIRMINGHAM CITY

The last two times Birmingham City lost their top-flight status, in 2006 and 2008, they bounced straight back from the Championship and were favourites to do so.

The St Andrew's landscape has changed significantly since, however.

The Carling Cup-winning team that brought the club their first trophy since 1963 has been ripped apart and Alex McLeish caused a storm by quitting for Aston Villa after the Blues went down on the final day of the season.

New manager Chris Hughton has his work cut out to fashion a strong and competitive team because of the sale of star players and a lack of cash for signings of his own, caused by a financial crisis engulfing the club's owner Carson Yeung out in Hong Kong.

Relegation exacerbated the Blues situation and to make matters worse Yeung faces a 14-year jail term if found guilty of money laundering, involving £59m.

He is up in court on August 11 and such a backdrop, and a squad that has lost quality and at present lacks depth, points to troubled times.

Colin Tattum, Birmingham Mail

BLACKPOOL

Tricky to call. Relegation was particularly painful, because the Seasiders threw it away – they should have stayed up.

Going down meant best players Charlie Adam and David Vaughan had no choice but to leave.

Their departure has hit the midfield area hard and success now depends entirely on how Ian Holloway's new signings fare.

It's a big test for Holloway. He inherited a good group of players when he arrived in 2009 and by tweaking the tactics and changing the mindset, won a remarkable and unexpected promotion.

Now his task his different - he has to build a squad rather than motivate one.

The keeper and back four remains the same, though - a bonus. Then again they did concede goals left, right and centre in the Prem so maybe not!

Fans expect a promotion challenge, but top half finish might be more realistic.

Steve Canavan, Blackpool Gazette

BRIGHTON & HA

Brighton won League One under Gus Poyet with a brand of pass-from-the-back football unique to the lower divisions.

They will play the same way in the Championship but in a new £93m stadium, The Amex, funded by wealthy chairman and lifelong fan Tony Bloom.

The Seagulls signalled their intention to be no back numbers by beating Leicester and West Ham to the signature of Peterborough hot-shot Craig Mackail-Smith.

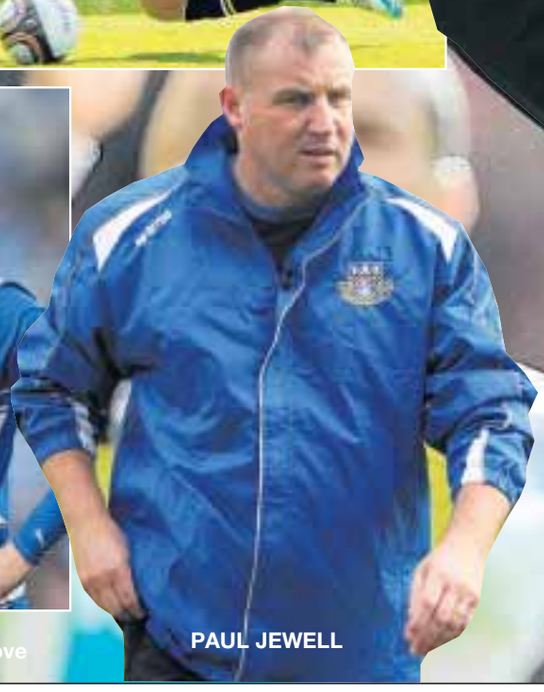
They have also re-signed flying Newcastle winger Kazenga LuaLua on loan from Newcastle.

It's a big step up and Poyet's pretty side could be overpowered at times, but they should not be under-estimated.

Andy Naylor, The Argus

KEY MAN: Craig Mackail-Smith

GREAT BUSINESS: Matt Mills, above



PAUL JEWELL

CARDIFF CITY

Malky Mackay is leading a Bluebirds revolution.

The new manager, who took over from Dave Jones, was faced with a difficult situation after 12 players at the end of last season. Eight loan signings, including Craig Bellamy from Manchester City, returned to their clubs. Jay Bothroyd and Michael Chopra were among others to depart.

Scot Mackay, 39, had worked quickly. He brought in new backroom staff including assistant manager David Kerslake and coach Joe McBride plus nine new players. He snapped up keys players out of contract at their clubs, while Mackay edged ahead of Rangers to sign Scottish international Kenny Miller in a £700,000 transfer from Bursaspor inTurkey. Miller is likely to play alongside Robert Earnshaw in attack.

'Earnie' is back for a second spell with his local team, having grown up in nearby Caerphilly.

He is on 198 career goals and is adamant his partnership with Miller will flourish.

Slovakian under-21 international Filip Kiss is another key signing. He has joined Cardiff on a season-long loan from Slovan Bratislava and looks a player with the ability to make an impact.

Cardiff City would love to sign Bellamy again and the local boy, who lives only three miles from the training ground, did pledge to return at the end of last season.

That will be down to Manchester City.

Bellamy is not in manager Roberto Mancini's plans it seems, but he has one year to go on a lucrative contract

Terry Phillips, Media Wales

IPSWICH

Seven new players and there are still some weaknesses.

That shows the job that has faced Paul Jewell in his first pre-season at Ipswich Town.

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TEN YEARS AT ST MARY'S – TURN TO CENTRE PAGES

Saints Spotlight

TOUGH CHALLENGE AHEAD: Ian Holloway.

Key figures in 2011/12 Championship

The summer started with the expected departure of club captain David Norris and key defender Gareth McAuley. Teen ace Connor Wickham followed soon after.

But Jewell has shrewdly played the free markets and scanned the bargain bins.

Michael Chopra could finally answer the club's long-standing search for goals while the signings of Lee Bowyer, Ivar Ingimarsson, Jay Emmanuel-Thomas and David Stockdale (on loan) have all been celebrated.

Hopes are higher in Suffolk than they have been for many years. The play-offs are a realistic target.

Dave Gooderham, Ipswich Evening Star

LEEDS UNITED

Expectation in Leeds is low after an odd summer of few signings.

Everybody, Simon Grayson included, seemed to agree that significant improvements to the squad were necessary to allow Leeds to have another good go at the play-offs but midfielder Michael Brown has so far been the only signing of particular note.

Andy Lonergan arrived from Preston North End but it was something of a surprise that Grayson chose to replace Kasper Schmeichel with a new goalkeeper in the first place, and other areas of his team seemed more in need of close attention.

Crucially, Leeds have seen off interest in Max Gradel and Robert Snodgrass – two of their most influential players – but top scorer Luciano Becchio is presently injured and striker Davide Somma will not be fit until after the turn of the year.

The key to everything, however, is likely to be United's defence.

The concession of 70 league goals last season was the club's undoing and one big bonus is the return to full fitness of centre-back Patrick Kisnorbo after a 14-month absence.

Phil Hay, Yorkshire Evening Post

LEICESTER CITY

It is hard to believe City will have ever entered a season with such high expectations.

Leicester will start this campaign as one of the favourites for promotion, and rightly so after an eventful summer off the pitch.

Since the end of last season, nine players have so far been signed at an expense to the club's ambitious Thai owners of around £10 million.

The training ground has been rebuilt, the stadium has been rebranded the King Power Stadium and Real Madrid were persuaded to fly in for a prestigious friendly.

Of course, the owners want a return on their hefty investment and manager Sven-Goran Eriksson is under pressure to deliver only one prize – promotion.

If he fails, Eriksson is unlikely to still be at Leicester next season, but if he succeeds City's ambitious plans will be taken to the next level and even more investment is expected.

Rob Tanner, Leicester Mercury

HULL CITY

There is a quiet confidence around the Hull camp that this year might be something special.

While Championship rivals have thrown around vast resources this summer, the Tigers have opted to stick, rather than twist.

Transfer targets frustratingly came and went but Nigel Pearson still has belief that his side will challenge for honours.

The statistics back it up. A run of six defeats in 31 league games from November is the stuff of a genuine promotion contender.

Replicate that form over the next nine months and they will not be far away.

There are still concerns about it the City squad, though.

Big games last season too often saw inexperience trip them up and with the Championship looking far more challenging than last season, this battle of attrition will demand strong wills.

Phil Buckingham, Hull Daily Mail.

READING

Reading exceeded expectations last season as they surged up the league late in the season to reach the play-off final at Wembley.

A repeat performance this season with one of the smallest wage bills and transfer budgets in the Championship would surely see manager Brian McDermott made a freeman of the town.

Losing captain Matt Mills to Leicester was a blow, but in truth £4.5million for a player who can be erratic and petulant at times is great business.

Sadly McDermott won't be getting his hands on that cash, but has bought in highly-rated Spurs centre-back Bongani Khumalo on loan.

Shane Long is unlikely to be at the club beyond August 31, so Noel Hunt and possibly surprise package and converted-winger Hal Robson-Kanu will be tasked with leading the line.

McDermott has pulled many a rabbit out of the hat before and he will have to continue doing that this season if he is going to keep Royals pushing for a top-six place.

Jonny Fordham, Reading Post

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

FOREST have made one outstanding signing this summer – Steve McClaren.

But, otherwise, their transfer market efforts have been largely true to form.

Seven players left over the summer, after their contracts expired, while they also saw loan players Kris Boyd and Paul Konchesky depart.

And, so far, only three new signings have been brought in to replace them, leaving the former England boss frustrated already.

Billy Davies was constantly at loggerheads with the club hierarchy, over their failure to land the transfer targets he craved, and the pattern seems to have continued going into the new season.

Forest will again go into the new season with a decidedly compact squad – and one that still does not include a recognised first choice left-back after more than three years.

Chris Cohen, regarded as one of the most consistent midfielders in the Championship over the last few seasons, will instead revert back to the role in the back four where he began his career with West Ham.

The three signings Forest have made are impressive and will add some valuable experience.

Jonathan Greening, George Boateng and Andy Reid have all flourished in the Premier League and will add the composure and comfort on the ball that will be required for the passing game

CHRIS COHEN

McClaren wants the team to adopt.

If they can remain injury free, Forest have a good chance of challenging for a third consecutive top-six finish. But a few injuries or suspensions in key areas could quickly leave them short of numbers.

Paul Taylor, Nottingham Evening Post

PORTSMOUTH

Another new season, another new owner, except Convers Sports Initiatives have actually put money into the club.

Steve Cotterill has been given an unspecified transfer kitty which has already been dipped into to recruit Greg Halford, Jason Pearce, Stephen Henderson and Luke Varney.

He also managed to bring David Norris to the south coast on a free transfer having left Ipswich.

Clearly many reasons to be positive, although the club with the smallest squad in the Football League last season continues to be hamstrung by meagre numbers.

Pompey currently possess just 15 first teamers, plus a couple of kids.

Cotterill and the players don't need reminding plenty more player recruitment is needed if they are to build on an encouraging base.

Neil Allen, Portsmouth News

NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL COVERAGE STARTS ON PAGE 32

Saints Spotlight

Riverside trip the longest

MIDDLESBROUGH will provide Saints with their longest trip of the 2011/12 Championship campaign.

The trek to Boro's Riverside ground from St Mary's is just under a 600-mile round-trip, according to the AA.

Such a trip should take Saints fans around 10 and a half hours.

Even that journey, though, is less than Saints' longest trek of their two League One seasons.

That was the 664-mile round trip from the south coast to Carlisle's Brunton Park.

Games at Blackpool and Hull are also a 500-mile plus round-trip for travelling Saints fans this season.

And the trek to the former's KC Communications Stadium is made even worse by the fact it's on a Tuesday night in March.

TO HULL AND BACK ... AND IN MIDWEEK!
Saints make the trip to Humberside on a Tuesday in March.

Not that Hull fans can laugh – they have to make the trip to St Mary's on a Tuesday night in late November!

No surprises for guessing Saints' shortest league journey of 2011/12 – the trip to Fratton Park in December.

Here are the mileages, in round trips, to all Saints' league rivals plus the time the AA believe the overall journey should take.

	RT	Time
Barnsley:	432	7 hr 48 m
Birmingham:	264	5hr 4 m
Blackpool:	528	9 hr 38m
Brighton:	130	3hr 8m
Bristol City:	214	4hr 0m
Burnley:	512	8 hr 56m
Cardiff City:	276	5 hr 6m
Coventry City:	254	4 hr 42m
Crystal Palace:	182	3 hr 46m
Derby County:	278	6 hr 18m
Doncaster:	432	7hr 34m
Hull City:	508	9 hr 04m
Ipswich Town:	338	6 hr 2m
Leeds Utd:	480	8 hr 16m
Leicester City:	294	5 hr 24m
Middlesbrough:	596	10 hr 22m
Millwall:	168	3 hr 50m
Nottm Forest:	352	6 hr 26m
Peterborough:	208	5 hr 50m
Portsmouth:	40	1 hr 8m
Reading:	80	2 hr 10m
Watford:	166	3 hr 12m
West Ham:	178	4 hr 18m

RT: Round trip in miles from St Mary's stadium.

Away the lads ...

TEN YEARS AT ST MARY'S – EIGHT-PAGE SPECIAL STARTS ON 24/25

Adam Rant

This week's big talking points with **Adam Leitch**

Time to replace arrogance with a little bit of humility ...

NO MORE: Saints have swapped games against the likes of Hartlepool for more glamourous clubs with Premier League backgrounds.

SAINTS fans should really appreciate what they have got this time round in the Championship.

Generations of the club's supporters were in shock when the club were relegated from the Premier League in 2005.

The second tier was a level they had not competed in for near on three decades.

Like the supporters of many long standing top flight clubs, particularly in the era of saturation Premier League coverage, it seemed the Football League was some kind of gaping abyss, less glamorous, less money, worse football.

If that was the feeling for the first season or two in the Championship, then it has well and truly been put into perspective by two campaigns in League One.

They say you don't know what you've got til it's gone, and possibly that was true of Saints supporters.

They certainly know now and those generations of Saints fans that felt that initial shock, and the supporters that have joined since, well and truly know what it's all about.

No disrespect to League One because there are a lot of good, honest clubs, playing what you might consider real football.

It's a bit like a throwback to how football was for most clubs before the wealthy hand of the Premier League and Sky landed on their shoulders.

Soul destroying

And in so, so many ways that is not a bad thing at all.

But you cannot deny that it's more exciting the higher up you go.

Adam Rant doesn't mind admitting it applies to him as well.

That initial sense of giving up trips to Old Trafford, Stamford Bridge, Anfield and the like for Championship grounds was not particularly palatable.

It was a little soul destroying.

But a couple of seasons in League One makes you realise how good you had it.

Now the prospect of trips to those very same Championship grounds seems like it will be luxury compared to Hartlepool, Yeovil and the like.

And then there is the standard of football which should, in theory, be better than what we saw in League One.

Even the less glamorous Championship sides have teams packed full of familiar names, plenty of former Premier League players.

There shouldn't be as many teams that want to just stifle Saints because they realise they are inferior to Nigel Adkins' men and therefore will play just to keep a clean sheet and hope to nick a goal.

Instead, it will be other sides thinking Saints are inferior to them and going toe-to-toe.

How wonderful it will be to see that sort of football back again at St Mary's.

Looking back, maybe it wasn't just those at the top of Saints who had got complacent.

But almost everybody connected with the club.

That's why the arrogance that slightly spread through aspects of the club and the fan base, because of the superiority of having a billionaire owner in League One, needs to be got rid of.

We should approach the Championship wide-eyed and respectful.

There are plenty of clubs in there with claims to be at least as big, if not bigger, than Saints.

It's a step in the right direction but, no matter what happens, we should remember the lessons of the past decade.

We need to move forward with excitement but also humility.

Lovely balance

SO it turns out England might well be the best Test side in the world.

Their performances against India have underlined their growing reputation for quality, attacking cricket at the very highest level.

There is no doubt they have had luck on their side on their rise to the apex of the game, but they still deserve to be there.

The side has a lovely balance to it and there is depth in the squad as well.

India looked thoroughly under-prepared for this tour, maybe just plain exhausted, which is a shame.

We have not seen anywhere near the best of them.

But you can only beat what is in front of you and England's emphatic second Test win said all that needed to be said.

The defining challenge now will be to win a series in the sub-continent.

If England do that – next year when they go to Sri Lanka – then they will be undisputed and deserved Test match kings.

Bell was so lucky

INDIA'S act of sportsmanship by letting Ian Bell continue his innings after being run out was quite incredible – and very generous.

It was highly unfortunate but, ultimately, it was Bell's fault.

He no doubt was shattered mentally as well as physically after a gruelling and superb innings and simply didn't concentrate for a moment.

But India were well within their rights to capitalise.

The rules do exist for a reason and their decision to withdraw their appeal was very lenient indeed.

In fairness, the game was probably just about best served by the decision.

Let's remember the terrible incident where England ran out a New Zealand batsman after an accidental clash with the bowler when taking a run.

Paul Collingwood's decision to uphold that appeal was pretty low, which is why it was somewhat unedifying to hear of England making such a big deal of this.

That said, you cannot knock India for sportsmanship and playing the game in the correct spirit.

At least it shows that the principles of cricket can rise above everything else, even in marginal cases.

In this day and age there is something more comforting in that than the rules being strictly applied.

Premiership Spotlight

ARSENAL

Manager: Arsene Wenger
Position last season: 4th
Players in: Carl Jenkinson (Charlton, undisclosed), Gervinho (Lille, undisclosed)
Players out: Gael Clichy (Manchester City, undisclosed), Denilson (Sao Paulo, season loan), Jay Emmanuel-Thomas (Ipswich, undisclosed)
Key man: Robin van Persie
Chances: With or without Cesc Fabregas, big questions remain about the backbone of Wenger's young Gunners, who imploded last season after a shock defeat to Birmingham in the Carling Cup final. Expect more tests in the campaign ahead, with cups again the best chance of ending a seven-year trophy itch, and a real battle to hold onto their top-four status.
Predicted finish: 4th

ASTON VILLA

Manager: Alex McLeish
Position last season: 9th
Players in: Shay Given (Manchester City, undisclosed)
Players out: Nigel Reo-Coker (Bolton, free), John Carew, Robert Pires, Moustapha Salifou, Isaiah Osbourne (all released), Brad Friedel (Tottenham, free), Ashley Young (Man United, undisclosed), Stewart Downing (Liverpool, undisclosed)
Key Man: Darren Bent
Chances: McLeish's toughest task will be to win over the fans after his switch from bitter rivals Birmingham, but the former Rangers boss has the knowhow to steady the ship, helped by the goals of England striker Darren Bent.
Predicted finish: 11th

BLACKBURN

Manager: Steve Kean
Position last season: 15th
Players in: None
Players out: Jason Brown, Benjani Mwaruwari, Zurab Khizanishvili, Maceo Rigters (all released), Phil Jones (Manchester United, £16.5million), Frank Fielding (Derby, £300,000)
Key man: Morten Gamst Pedersen
Chances: Rovers rallied to beat the drop last season after changes under new ownership and the departure of Sam Allardyce. Kean, though, faces more battles ahead - and could fight to keep his own job if things go pear-shaped again.
Predicted finish: 20th

BOLTON

Manager: Owen Coyle
Position last season: 14th
Players in: Darren Pratley (Swansea, free), Nigel Reo-Coker (unattached)
Players out: Johan Elmander, Jlloyd Samuel, Joey O'Brien, Tamir Cohen, Ricardo Gardner (all released), Ali Al Habsi (Wigan, undisclosed), Matt Taylor (West Ham, undisclosed)
Key man: Kevin Davies
Chances: For a while it looked like Coyle had Bolton set for Europe, only to fade after a run to the FA Cup semi-finals. Should flirt with a top-10 finish.
Predicted finish: 13th

CHELSEA

Manager: Andre Villas-Boas
Position last season: Runners-up
Players in: Thibaut Courtois (Genk, undisclosed)
Players out: Michael Mancienne (Hamburg, undisclosed), Gokhan Tore (Hamburg, undisclosed), Jeffrey Bruma (Hamburg, season loan), Jack Cork (Southampton, undisclosed)
Key man: Fernando Torres
Chances: Villas-Boas will be expected to hit the ground running in his first season, and get the best out of Torres. Europe, though, is probably the main focus for Roman Abramovich's latest managerial appointment.
Predicted finish: 3rd

EVERTON

Manager: David Moyes
Position last season: 7th
Players in: None
Players out: James Vaughan (Norwich, undisclosed), Iain Turner (released)
Key man: Tim Cahill
Chances: Moyes continues to get his well-drilled outfit punching well above their weight and expect the Toffees to again be pressing for a top-six finish.
Predicted finish: 7th

FULHAM

Manager: Martin Jol
Position last season: 8th
Players in: Csaba Somogyi (unattached), John Arne Riise (Roma, undisclosed), Marcel Gecov (Slovan Liberec, undisclosed), Pajtim Kasami (Palermo, undisclosed)
Players out: Kagisho Dikgacoi (Crystal Palace, undisclosed), Diomansy Kamara (Eskisehirspor, free), Jonathan Greening (Nottingham Forest, undisclosed), John Pantsil, Eddie Johnson, Matthew Saunders, Pascal Zuberbuhler, Zoltan Gera (all released), David Stockdale (Ipswich, season loan)
Key man: Bobby Zamora
Chances: Jol has already got his squad shaping up after an early return for Europa League qualifiers. With a good start, there is no reason why the Cottagers should not steer well clear of the bottom half this season.
Predicted finish: 9th

LIVERPOOL

Manager: Kenny Dalglish
Position last season: 6th
Players in: Jordan Henderson (Sunderland, undisclosed), Charlie Adam (Blackpool, £6.75million), Alexander Doni (Roma, free), Stewart Downing (Aston Villa, undisclosed)
Players out: Paul Konchesky (Leicester, undisclosed), Peter Gulacsi (Hull, season loan)
Key man: Steven Gerrard
Chances: Dalglish brought the feel-good factor back to Anfield midway through last season and, while the Reds may be just short of the Champions League places, expect more signs of progress.
Predicted finish: 5th

MANCHESTER CITY

Manager: Roberto Mancini
Position last season: 3rd
Players in: Gael Clichy (Arsenal, undisclosed), Stefan Savic (Partizan Belgrade, undisclosed)
Players out: Patrick Vieira (retired), Javier Garrido (released), Jerome Boateng (Bayern Munich, undisclosed), Ben Mee (Burnley, season loan), Shay Given (Aston Villa, undisclosed), Jo (Internacional, undisclosed), Kieran Trippier (Burnley, season loan), Michael Johnson (Leicester, season loan)
Key man: Yaya Toure
Chances: City's wealthy owners will view anything other than a sustained assault on the Premier League title as a failure. With or without Carlos Tevez, expect the Blues to be the team to beat.
Predicted finish: Champions

MANCHESTER UNITED

Manager: Sir Alex Ferguson
Position last season: Champions
Players in: Phil Jones (Blackburn, £16.5million), Ashley Young (Aston Villa, undisclosed), David De Gea (Atletico Madrid, undisclosed)
Players out: Edwin van der Sar (retired), Paul Scholes (retired), Owen Hargreaves (released), Bebe (Besiktas, season loan) Ritchie de Laet (Norwich, season loan), Nicky Ajose (Peterborough, undisclosed), Wes Brown (Sunderland, undisclosed), John O'Shea (Sunderland, undisclosed), Corry Evans (Hull, £500,000)
Key man: Wayne Rooney
Chances: United dug in last season when all around them faltered, and will be the leading contenders once again – but their wealthy 'noisy neighbours' could just have the final word.
Predicted finish: Runners-up

NEWCASTLE

THE WHOLE WORLD

AMID all the dire predictions about the looming threat of financial meltdown of Premier League clubs, the reality is that only two would, in their current state, have serious difficulty in meeting UEFA's new spending restrictions.

It is no coincidence that both of those clubs – Manchester City and Chelsea – have super-wealthy owners who are funding their spending operations in a way that would be unsustainable in any other business.

The other 18 clubs in the top flight should be there or thereabouts when it comes to complying with the rules laid down in UEFA's financial fair play system, where clubs in European competition will only be allowed to spend what they earn.

A club such as Blackburn, which has in previous years had losses of around £6million, should have little difficulty in complying, especially given that there will be some flexibility in the first years of the system's operation.

Chelsea and Manchester City are in a whole different ball park.

Roman Abramovich's lavish funding of Chelsea has brought plenty of trophies but at a cost – losses in the year ending June 2010 were £70.9million, in the season they won the Premier League and FA Cup, and before they splashed out around £70million on Fernando Torres and David Luiz.

Manchester City's financial predicament is even worse – their most recent figures showed a loss of £121million and even the recent announcement of a £400million, 10-year naming rights and sponsorship deal with Etihad Airways would not be nearly enough to secure the club complying with the UEFA rules.

There is also the threat for City that UEFA will judge the deals to be far above the normal market value.

UEFA's head of club licensing Andrea Traverso has warned that they will be watching to ensure clubs could not get under-the-counter income boosts from huge sponsorship or stadium naming rights deals from companies associated with them, and would have to prove any deals were close to the market value.

Traverso says the rules are "a sort of soft salary cap" and will be overseen by an independent panel to ensure they are being applied fairly across Europe.

Manchester City look like being an important test case for UEFA. Five companies with strong Abu Dhabi links now sponsor City and Arsenal's manager Arsene Wenger claims the credibility of UEFA's system is at stake.

"It raises the real question about the credibility of the financial fair play," Wenger said last month.

"That is what it is all about. (City) give us the message they can get around it by doing what we want.

"Normally the sponsorship has to be at the market price if the financial fair play has to have a chance.

"It cannot be tripled or quadrupled because that means it is better we don't do it and leave everybody free. That can be defended, but if they bring the rules in they have to be respected."

Manchester United and Liverpool should both be able to comply with the UEFA rules and the Liverpool owner John W Henry has publicly backed Wenger's stance.

City chief executive Garry Cook insist the club are in close contact with UEFA over the rules and are working towards compliance.

Whatever UEFA decide over the sponsorship deals, it is not just Manchester City that are on tenterhooks ...

...the whole of the football world is waiting to see what will unfold.

WHY SWANSEA WILL BE THE MAIN PREMIERSHIP STORY - SEE PAGES 14/15

Premiership Spotlight

HOLDS ITS BREATH

Chief executive Richard Scudamore is unconcerned by the widening financial gap between clubs at the top of the Premier League and the rest – as long as the overall standard remains competitive.

Manchester City, Manchester United and Liverpool have already invested heavily in players this summer while clubs such as Chelsea and Tottenham have been among the big spenders in recent seasons.

With such a large difference between the haves and have-nots, the Premier League is in danger of becoming a two-tier competition.

But Scudamore's main focus is to ensure every club at least has the capacity to compete on any given matchday.

"Ever since football began in England there's been financial disparity and I've presided over a league that has some clubs that turnover £300million a year and other clubs whose turnover is £50million a year," he said.

"The financial disparity has always been there, the issue for us is can we put on a competition and distribute the revenues that we generate centrally in such a way that each individual match remains competitive?

"So can Wolves, bottom of the league, turn up and beat Manchester United, who were unbeaten at the time and top of the league on a Saturday in February? That's all that matters to us.

"It is not my job to smooth out and iron out the financial disparities between clubs, an impossible thing to do, a non-starter, but we've got to make sure that each club at the smaller end is able to compete.

"Growing the league generally works for everybody because it gives everybody a lift up.

"The ratio of money (income distribution mechanism) top to bottom was about 2.7 to one, it's now about 1.54 to one so we've actually squeezed it.

"When the debate goes on about the relative merits of each league, while I have huge regard for La Liga (in Spain) and the beautiful football generated by Barcelona last season and Real Madrid did pretty well too, I wouldn't swap in terms of what they've got with those two clubs being so dominant within their league.

"I would much prefer the situation where yes, you can probably name the five or six clubs that might occupy the first four, five, six places in our league but that's not quite the same thing and there's always teams below that that can beat them."

With UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules set to be implemented in 2013, the hope is it will lead to a more level playing field.

Manchester City's recent sponsorship deal with Etihad attracted criticism from some quarters, though, after being perceived as an attempt to circumvent those rules.

"I don't think our clubs should get involved too much at looking at each other and sniping about revenue deals," he added.

"The idea that Financial Fair Play – which is supposed to be a cost constrainer – is now becoming a revenue analysis business is just crazy.

"You can't argue with it, the idea that you can only spend what you raise in revenue is not a bad idea.

"But English football is being predicated on people being able to raise revenues, whether it be benefactor funding, local businesses, sponsorship deals or wealthy foreign investors.

"Therefore the idea that somehow we're all sitting round worrying about where they've got their money from is probably not somewhere the Premier League generally wants to be involved."

Manager: Alan Pardew
Position last season: 12th
Players in: Yohan Cabaye (Lille, undisclosed), Demba Ba (West Ham, undisclosed), Sylvain Marveaux (Rennes, undisclosed), Mehdi Abeid (Lens, undisclosed)
Players out: Sol Campbell, Shefki Kuqi (both released), Kevin Nolan (West Ham, undisclosed), Kazenga LuaLua (Brighton, loan until January)
Key man: Joey Barton
Chances: Pardew produced some consistent results to win over his doubters, but will need more of the same to keep the Toon Army onside.
Predicted finish: 12th

NORWICH

Manager: Paul Lambert
Position last season: Second in the Championship
Players in: James Vaughan (Everton, undisclosed), Steve Morison (Millwall, £2.5million), Elliott Bennett (Brighton, £1.5million), Ritchie de Laet (Manchester United, season loan), Bradley Johnson (Leeds, free), Anthony Pilkington (Huddersfield, undisclosed), Kyle Naughton (Tottenham, season loan)
Players out: Luke Daley (Plymouth, undisclosed)
Key man: Wes Hoolahan
Chances: Lambert has taken the Norfolk club a long way in a short space of time, and following some decent summer additions the Canaries have every chance of staying up.
Predicted finish: 17th

QPR

Manager: Neil Warnock
Position last season: Championship winners
Players in: Jay Bothroyd (Cardiff, free), Kieron Dyer (unattached), Danny Gabbidon (unattached)
Players out: Mikele Leigertwood (Reading, undisclosed)
Key man: Adel Taarabt
Chances: It has been some 15 years since QPR were last in the top flight, and so far the wealth of their major shareholders – Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone and former Renault F1 team principal Flavio Briatore – has not been reflected in Rangers' summer spending.
Predicted finish: 15th

STOKE

Manager: Tony Pulis
Position last season: 13th
Players in: Jonathan Woodgate (unattached)
Players out: Abdoulaye Faye, Eidur Gudjohnsen, Ibrahima Sonko (all released)
Key man: Kenwyne Jones
Chances: Once again Pulis' squad proved there is more to them than just the long throws of Rory Delap as they reached the FA Cup final. Expect them to compete again and ruffle a few more feathers with good old-fashioned hard work.
Predicted finish: 14th

SUNDERLAND

Manager: Steve Bruce
Position last season: 10th
Players in: Ahmed Elmohamady (ENPPI, undisclosed), Keiren Westwood (Coventry, free), Sebastian Larsson (Birmingham, free), Connor Wickham (Ipswich, £8million), Ji Dong-won (Chunnam Dragons, undisclosed), Craig Gardner (Birmingham, undisclosed), Wes Brown (Manchester United, undisclosed), John O'Shea (Manchester United, undisclosed), David Vaughan (unattached)
Players out: Jordan Henderson (Liverpool, undisclosed), Boudewijn Zenden (released), Cristian Riveros (Kayserispor, season loan), David Healy (Rangers, free)
Key man: Asamoah Gyan
Chances: With plenty of fresh faces, Sunderland should have enough options to last the distance, but might just fall short of a European place.
Predicted finish: 8th

SWANSEA

Manager: Brendan Rodgers
Position last season: Third in the Championship (promoted via the play-offs)
Players in: Danny Graham (Watford, £3.5million), Steven Caulker (Tottenham, season loan), Jose Moreira (Benfica, undisclosed)
Players out: Darren Pratley (Bolton, free), Dorus de Vries (Wolves, free)
Key man: Garry Monk
Chances: The first Welsh club to play in the Premiership will provide a stern test for many sides at the Liberty Stadium, where form will hold the key to survival hopes. Consistent troubles on the road, though, and the Swans will face a tough battle to stay up.
Predicted finish: 19th

TOTTENHAM

Manager: Harry Redknapp
Position last season: 5th
Players in: Brad Friedel (Aston Villa, free), Cristian Ceballos (unattached)
Players out: Jonathan Woodgate (released), Jamie O'Hara (Wolves, £5million), Steven Caulker (Swansea, season loan), Paul-Jose M'Poku (Standard Liege, undisclosed), Kyle Naughton (Norwich, season loan), Bongani Khumalo (Reading, season loan), Nathan Byrne (Bournemouth, season loan)
Key man: Rafael van der Vaart
Chances: Competition for the top four places looks tougher than ever, and Redknapp's men could be squeezed out.
Predicted finish: 6th

WEST BROM

Manager: Roy Hodgson
Position last season: 11th
Players in: Gareth McAuley (Ipswich, free), Billy Jones (Preston, free)
Players out: Abdoulaye Meite (Dijon, free), Giles Barnes, Dean Kiely (both released), Borja Valero (Villarreal, undisclosed) Scott Carson (Bursaspor, undisclosed), Gianni Zuiverloon (Real Mallorca, undisclosed)
Key man: Peter Odemwingie
Chances: Hodgson steadied the ship after his mid-season appointment and, following some summer additions, the Baggies should again be comfortable in mid-table.
Predicted finish: 10th

WIGAN

Manager: Roberto Martinez
Position last season: 16th
Players in: Ali Al Habsi (Bolton, undisclosed)
Players out: Steven Caldwell, Daniel de Ridder, Jason Koumas, Mike Pollitt (all released), Antonio Amaya (Real Betis, undisclosed)
Key man: James McCarthy
Chances: Martinez produced the 'Great Escape' in May, and then spurned Villa to stay with the Latics, but looks set to face another testing campaign, which could end in bitter disappointment.
Predicted finish: 18th

WOLVES

Manager: Mick McCarthy
Position last season: 17th
Players in: Dorus de Vries (Swansea, free), Jamie O'Hara (Tottenham, £5million), Roger Johnson (Birmingham, undisclosed)
Players out: Marcus Hahnemann, David Jones (both released), Steven Mouyokolo (Sochaux, season loan), Danny Batth (Sheffield Wednesday, loan until January)
Key man: Kevin Doyle
Chances: Wolves had looked a solid unit, only to struggle and eventually only stayed up by the skin of their teeth as results went their way on the final day. Do not expect McCarthy's men to make the same mistakes again.
Predicted finish: 16th

Predictions by the Press Association.

EX-SAINTS BOSSES FACING MASSIVE SEASONS IN THE TOP FLIGHT – SEE PAGES 16/17

Premiership Spotlight

SPORTS QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"This is not good for Brazil. Some people talk more than they know" - **Pele gives his verdict on the row surrounding Brazil World Cup chief Ricardo Teixeira, who described the English press as "corrupt".**

"If only we as players could tell the fans exactly how it is, without them above fining us lots of money. There will be a time and a place. If it wouldn't effect (sic) team morale and cause unrest within the dressing room, am certain Jose's comments would be the tip of the iceberg....." - **Joey Barton hints at disharmony at Newcastle via his Twitter account.**

"Newcastle United can confirm that Joey Barton has been placed on the transfer list. The player has been advised that he can leave the club on a free transfer" - **Newcastle respond in no uncertain terms.**

"Somewhere in those high echelons of NUFC, they have decided, I am persona non grata. I am on a free but the honour of wearing those B+W stripes, surpasses that. One day the board might realise, what the shirt signifies. HONOUR and PRIDE. Thanks for your continued support..... 'toonarmy' - **Barton again.**

BALOTELLI, LEFT

"I think it's a wee bit suicidal by Newcastle" - **Barton's agent Willie McKay sees unlikely shades of grey after his client is told he can leave the black-and-white stripes for nothing.**

"I'm not happy in Manchester, I don't like the city. Everything's okay with the coach and my team-mates, but the city is not to my taste" - **Manchester City striker Mario Balotelli makes headlines yet again.**

"Marcel Gecov is a Danny Murphy type of player, who can play a little bit more advanced as well. He's a ginger but he's a real ginger - he's very versatile, he can play, he can tackle as well" - **Martin Jol briefs the media on one of his new signings.**

"We only got three weeks off in the summer but it was my first cap. I was not thinking about the time off, I was just wanting to get my first cap under my belt" - **Celtic's James Forrest would be better served wearing his first Scotland cap, earned against the Republic of Ireland in May, on his head.**

ARSENE WENGER

So many questions, but Fergie will

RARELY has the start of a new Premier League season thrown up so many conundrums, ***writes FRANK MALLEY.***

Can Chelsea's new young manager, Andre Villas-Boas, convince Roman Abramovich that football clubs work best when the owner puts his hand in his pocket but stays out of team matters?

Will Manchester City kick on from winning the FA Cup and mount a realistic challenge for major prizes at home and in Europe?

Can Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger find a way of turning his side into something more than just the most eye-pleasing performers in English football?

Do Tottenham have the will and manager Harry Redknapp the nous to build on their Champions League quarter-final adventure last season?

Can Liverpool boss Kenny Dalglish continue his brilliant refurbishment at Anfield and restore the five-time champions of Europe to their former glory?

They are all questions which suggest we are in for one of the most competitive and unpredictable seasons in Premier League history.

Yet so many of the answers all hang on one club, Manchester United, and one man, Sir Alex Ferguson.

It is the season in which Ferguson will turn 70. The season which will mark his 25th year as supremo at Old Trafford.

The season in which he could win United's 20th league title.

A season in which he has already warned the rest that, despite his age and his astounding accomplishments, there will be no let-up in his quest to put more trophies in the Old Trafford cabinet.

That is why he was no slouch in his scramble for reinforcements with Edwin van der Sar, Paul Scholes and Gary Neville all having retired this summer.

A goalkeeper was a priority and 20-year-old David De Gea from Atletico Madrid looks a shrewd piece of business.

Phil Jones from Blackburn will also bolster squad depth while England's Ashley Young, signed from Aston Villa, has the opportunity to elevate his career to a new level by giving United pace and trickery out wide.

In truth, United have been in transition for a couple of years and last season they were carried by their home form, winning 18 of their 19 matches at Old Trafford and drawing the other.

Can Swans swim

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL: Swansea celebrate promotion to the Premiership.

AUSTERITY Britain.

That's the phrase I've heard over and over again these last few years.

Rising petrol costs, falling house prices, pension problems, severe Government cuts.

'To quote from 'Ghost Town', the Specials' seminal 1981 hit, 'people getting angry' ... student protests, increasing strike action, the latter certainly something that has affected the citizens of Southampton this summer.

That is the reality of life in Britain in 2011.

No such reality exists in the cash-rich Premiership.

It hasn't for many a year, and who knows when reality will eventually hit home?

Perhaps it never will.

Look at Liverpool, the club which once picked up lower league bargains such as Ian Rush, Phil Neal, Kevin Keegan and Ray Clemence for tens of thousands of pounds.

Now they are paying £20m for a Sunderland midfielder, another £20m for an Aston Villa winger.

Simon Carter
simon.carter@dailyecho.co.uk
SPORTS EDITOR

That comes just a few months after they shelled out £35m on a Newcastle striker with half a season in the top flight behind him.

These are ridiculous fees, but Liverpool – obviously – aren't the most lavish spenders of recent years.

Since Roman Abramovich completed his Chelsea takeover in the summer of 2003, the Blues have spent around £500m on buying players.

Half a billion pounds!

Just a few weeks after the Russian had taken over, Chelsea were splashing out £7m on Saints defender Wayne Bridge.

It seemed a lot of money at the time – it *was* a lot of money – but that was just the start.

The conclusion probably came earlier this year when Chelsea spent £50m on Fernando Torres.

In recent times, though, even Abramovich has been out-spent – a fact which would have been considered preposterous prior to Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's takeover of Manchester City in 2008.

Since September of that year – less than three years ago – City have spent around £350m.

Granted, they have won the FA Cup – their first major trophy since the mid-1970s – but, like Chelsea, City's ambition spreads far greater than just that bit of silverware.

Chelsea have so far managed, for their £500m outlay, three Premiership titles, three FA Cups, two League Cups and one losing European Champions League final.

Despite the trophies, it is the lack of tangible success abroad that no doubt rankles Abramovich.

That is why he has bank-rolled a football club like no-one else had ever done so before.

That is why Mansour has poured £300m into Manchester City, a club that had won as much major silverware as Saints since the start of the 1975-76 season prior to his involvement.

Those phenomenally rich people aren't just interested in success at home.

Their tentacles stretch further, into Europe.

Nothing wrong with that, of course.

But to the average football fan, the sums of money I've mentioned should be simply abhorrent.

Premiership Spotlight

be leading the way yet again ...

They will miss the influence of Scholes and Van der Sar but they remain the team to beat.

Not that anyone should rule out Chelsea.

Villas-Boas has a sharp mind, is a disciple of Jose Mourinho, and has strength and experience at the core of his side.

His challenge is coaxing the best out of an ageing team and getting Fernando Torres to play as he did 18 months ago and not as he has for the past 12 months.

If Villas-Boas can solve when, where and how to play Torres and Didier Drogba then Chelsea could yet prove to be the most powerful squad.

FRANK MALLEY'S PREDICTIONS

Premier League champions: Manchester United.

Runners-up: Man City.
FA Cup: Chelsea.
Carling Cup: Liverpool.
Relegated: Swansea, Norwich, Wolves.

Manchester City, too, are likely to be more of a team than the individuals thrown together with indecent haste and obscene amounts of cash these past couple of years.

Whether they have the depth and unity to fight on all fronts, including the Champions League, and win a major prize is uncertain.

They still might be a season or two away from that.

Liverpool could be the ones to watch as Kenny Dalglish has worked wonders in his time back in charge.

Charlie Adam is an inspired signing at £6.75million, just the sort of inventive midfield force required to service Andy Carroll and Luis Suarez.

They are a smart bet to regain their place in England's top four, probably at the expense of Arsenal.

At the other end the same old faithful, Wolves, Wigan and West Brom, are likely to be scrapping it out in one long relegation dogfight.

Almost certainly they will be joined by the newly-promoted trio in the shape of Swansea, Norwich and QPR.

It is going to be that sort of season. Tight and tense. Anything but dull.

Yet, for all its unpredictability, at the end of it do not be surprised if the big domestic prize once again goes to Ferguson.

Still leading the way after all these years.

SIR ALEX FERGUSON

in a sea of cash?

NATHAN DYER

The top clubs have always spent big in terms of the British economy – remember Nottingham Forest making Trevor Francis English football's first £1m player during the ferocious strike-fuelled Winter of Discontent in 1978/79?

But the current spending levels, topped up by overseas cash, does concern me as a football fan first and foremost.

It should concern you, too.

Never again, it seems, will we see the likes of Saints and Watford finish runner-ups in the top flight of English football, as they did back in the 1980s.

So few clubs can now seriously challenge for the top four.

Will we ever see the likes of Oxford, Luton, Wimbledon and Coventry winning major cups, as they did in the 80s?

Will we ever see the likes of Swansea City finishing sixth in the top flight, as they did in the 1981/82 season?

Probably not, though the Swans are back rubbing shoulders with the elite again this coming campaign.

But we don't have to wait to find out how life has changed since the Welsh club were last in the highest echelon.

Sadly, we know.

We know the Swans will struggle, just as the likes of Blackpool and Hull have struggled in recent years.

Still, for me, the Swans will provide the main story of the 2011/12 Premiership season – whether they stay up or go down.

For they are proof positive that hope springs eternal.

Eight years ago they were almost relegated to the Conference, now they open their first ever Premiership season against moneybags Manchester City.

Anyone who enjoys football for the romance it can bring, rather than the money the clubs can spend, should be wishing for a Swans success ... in the same way that two of the best results of last season were Blackpool doing the double over Liverpool.

Of course, those sort of results are the exception to the rule, which is why Ian Holloway's men went down and why they will be adjusting to life back in the Championship in the next few weeks.

But at least they had some days in the sunshine, some days when most neutral fans in the country wished them well.

At least they loved and lost ...

Those are the days that Nigel Adkins and his squad are trying to bring back to St Mary's.

The days when Saints will again try and compete against clubs capable of spending mega millions on a single player.

You might be a Saints fan confident that the current players are capable of emulating Norwich and winning back to back promotions.

You might be a Saints fan desperate to see more new players brought in, just to ensure a mid-table finish.

But whatever camp you fall in, whether your glass is viewed as half-full or half-empty, just remember these three words ...

Hope springs eternal.

And if you don't believe me, watch Sky Sports on Monday, August 15, to see Swansea City back in the elite.

Then, to misquote the Monkees, you'll see Nathan Dyer's face ... and you'll be a believer too.

Sports Quiz

1 For which country does Javier Pastore play international football?
2 In what year did India register their Test series win in England?
3 Which country will host the World Athletics Champions later this month?
4 Which player holds the record for the most Super League tries scored?
5 Who is Britain's highest-ranked female tennis player?
6 Robin van Persie joined Arsenal from which side?
7 Which three Indian cricketers have each taken more than 400 Test wickets.
8 Who was the last non-European driver to win the Formula One title
9 Great Britain's Luol Deng plays basketball for which NBA team?
10 Who is coach of the France rugby union team?
11 In which year did Joey Barton win his solitary England cap?
12 Which Premier League club have released Gorka Pintado?
13 Australian half-backs Michael Dobson and Blake Green play for which Engage Super League club?
14 Which American city has a baseball team known as the Cardinals?
15 In which year did Tiger Woods last win a major?

JOEY BARTON

16 Which British television presenter made his one and only Formula One race start at the 1980 Belgian GP?
17 From which club did Liverpool sign Serbian midfielder Milan Jovanovic?
18 Which Czech won the women's Wimbledon singles title in 1998?
19 Which two British football clubs did Dutch winger Regi Blinker represent during a 20-year career?
20 Who are the reigning rugby league Four Nations champions?
21 Eric Cantona began his career at which club?
22 Which American Football team plays at Sun Life Stadium?
23 Who are the only side to have won more than one Twenty20 title in county cricket?
24 England wing Matt Banahan plays his club rugby for which Aviva Premiership club?
25 Who is coach of Bradford Bulls rugby league side?

ANSWERS

1. Argentina, 2. 1971, 3. South Korea, 4. Keith Senior, 5. Elena Baltacha; 6 Feyenoord; 7 Anil Kumble, Kapil Dev and Harbhajan Singh; 8 Jacques Villeneuve (Canada); 9 Chicago Bulls; 10 Marc Lievremont; 11 2007; 12 Swansea; 13 Hull KR; 14 St Louis; 15 2008; 16 Tiff Needell; 17 Standard Liege; 18 Jana Novotna; 19 Sheffield Wednesday and Celtic; 20 New Zealand; 21 Auxerre; 22 Miami Dolphins; 23 Leicestershire; 24 Bath; 25 Mick Potter.

Premiership Spotlight

The new kids on the block

PRESS Association reporter Carl Markham looks at 10 players who could make their breakthrough in the Barclays Premier League in 2011-12.

RAVEL MORRISON (Manchester United)

The 18-year-old is regarded as United's brightest young star since Paul Scholes and Ryan Giggs but unfortunately the only headlines he has managed to generate so far revolve around court appearances. However, United have stuck with the troubled teenager, indication alone of his talent, who has played for England from under-16 to under-18 level and made his first-team debut last October.

RAHEEM STERLING (Liverpool)

Despite not being 17 until December, the winger made huge strides in Liverpool's youth team last season and even travelled in the Europa League squad to Prague, although he did not make the bench.

HALLAM HOPE (Everton)

An England youth team-mate of

RAVEL MORRISON

Sterling, the 17-year-old striker has every chance of succeeding at Goodison Park where manager David Moyes is not afraid to give youngsters a chance and there always seem to be opportunities because of injuries in a relatively small squad.

PATRICK VAN AANHOLT (Chelsea)

Van Aanholt has found progress difficult as his way into the first team, for whom he made two substitute appearances in the 2009-10 season, has been blocked by Ashley Cole. However, the 20-year-old is rated highly at the club and was given a new four-year contract in May.

JACK COLBACK (Sunderland)

The midfielder's Premier League debut as a 20-year-old substitute in May 2010 lasted 12 minutes before he was sent off. After a second loan spell at Ipswich he returned to make 12 first-team appearances, seven of which were starts, in the second half of the season.

Continued on facing page ...

Ex-Saint Alan's got so much to prove to the Toon Army

LIKE it or not, Saints' Wembley-winning manager Alan Pardew is a man with plenty to prove ahead of the 2011/12 top flight campaign.

The Newcastle boss will head into the new season having achieved the initial task with which he was charged when he was appointed in December last year by ensuring the Magpies remained in the Premier League, ***writes DAMIAN SPELLMAN.***

That success was all the more creditable as it came against the backdrop of continuing anger at the Mike Ashley regime.

The sportswear tycoon, who had seen the criticism ease as the club gained promotion from the Championship at the first attempt in some style, sparked fresh disquiet when he almost immediately warned there would be no fresh capital outlay on the team.

But that paled into insignificance when Chris Hughton, the man who had masterminded the return to the big time, reinforced the squad on a tight budget and presided over an encouraging first half of the new season which included a famous 5-1 derby victory over Sunderland, was summarily dispatched.

If the opportunity that was presented to the experienced Pardew was too good to turn down – and it was indeed a remarkable return to the top flight by the man who a few months earlier had been sacked by third division Saints – it was one which brought its own unique problems.

The 50-year-old was damned by association by some as the latest member of the so-called 'Cockney Mafia' at Newcastle and little more than a puppet of the Ashley regime.

Even after guiding the club to safety – Pardew's reign began with a morale-boosting 3-1 home victory over Liverpool – there are those who are yet to be persuaded that is not the case.

Fermented unrest

His reputation was not enhanced by Andy Carroll's £35million departure for Anfield in January despite his repeated assurances the striker was not for sale, and the contract wrangles which have seen skipper Kevin Nolan head for West Ham and left Joey Barton and Jose Enrique in limbo have fermented unrest.

The situation with Barton has blown up this week, forcing Pardew to tell his players they are now banned from commenting on social network sites.

And Pardew's insistence that the entire proceeds of Carroll's sale would be ploughed back into the team have so far proved unfounded, and that has further fanned the flames.

But through it all, Pardew has remained bullish as he continues his mission to revive the club's on-field fortunes, a process he is convinced will be helped by his summer moves for French midfielders Yohan Cabaye and Sylvain Marveaux and Senegal international striker Demba Ba.

Pardew said: "The players we have added will bring some intelligence to our play, particularly Cabaye. You will see a slightly different Newcastle to last year.

"We have still got some key players from last year. Everyone is talking about the new players, but it is another Premier League year for Fabricio Coloccini, Steven Taylor is back to form, (former Saints academy defender) Mike Williamson had a great year and Shola Ameobi had a good year.

"We have got players who are coming off the back of a good season, so it all adds to the mix."

Pardew inherited a dressing room full of strong characters, led by Nolan, who had helped to foster the spirit which provided the foundation for recovery after relegation at the end of the 2008-09 season.

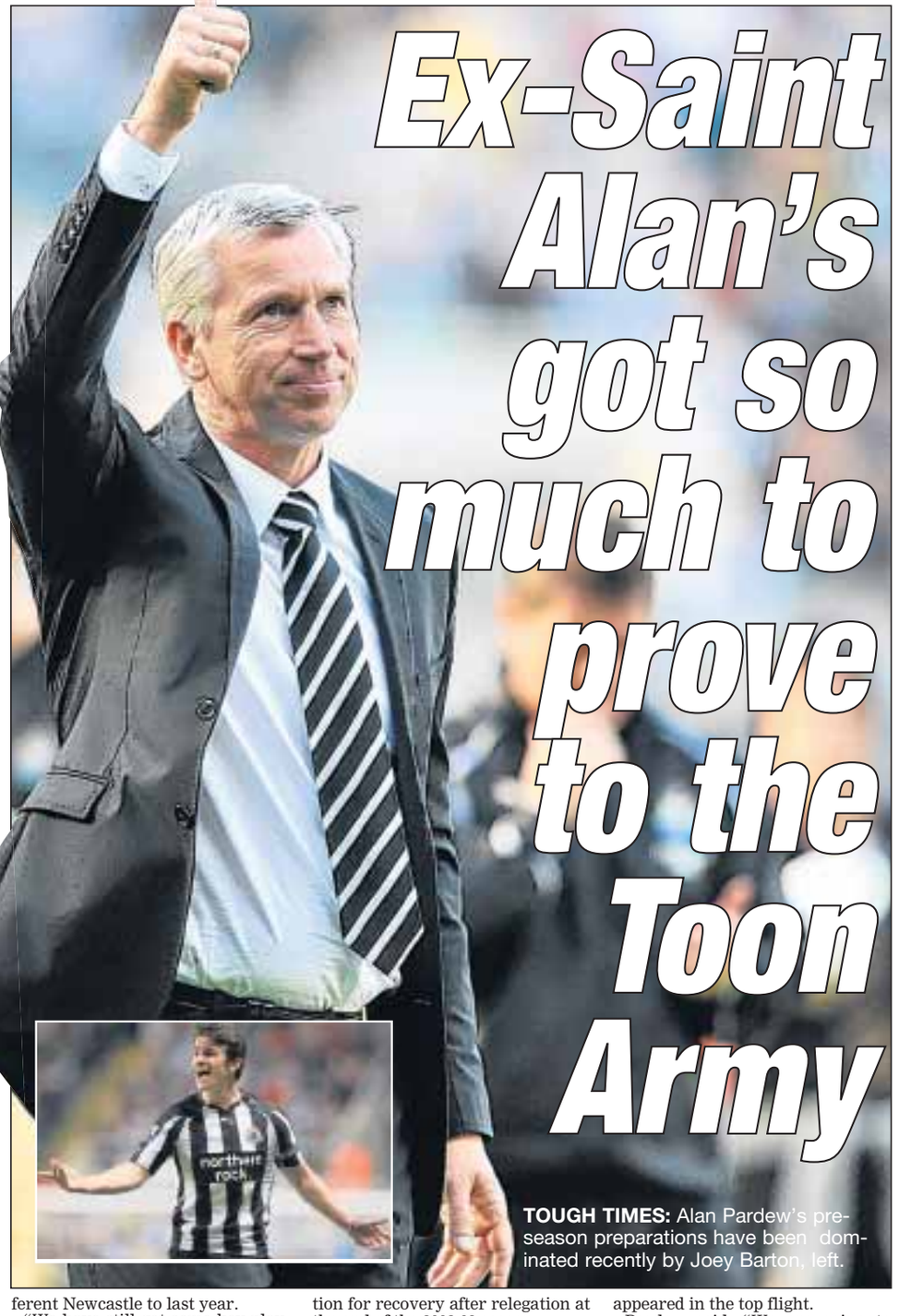
The manager is determined to maintain that sense of collective purpose despite Nolan's exit, although the addition of four more French-speaking players in Cabaye, Marveaux, Ba and Mehdi Abeid to go with Cheick Tiote and the Spanish-speaking triumvirate of new captain Coloccini, Jonas Gutierrez and Enrique, mean that is a challenge.

Certainly a different one to his rebuilding job at St Mary's two years ago, where he relied on mainly English players who had never appeared in the top flight.

Pardew said: "We are going to have a nucleus of a new side and it's very, very important we keep that team spirit which served us so well last year – we dug results out which most teams in the Premier League wouldn't have been able to do."

If Pardew is still on trial, so too is his new-look squad, but he is convinced it is stronger than the one which finished 2010/11, with the returns of the fit-again Hatem Ben Arfa and Dan Gosling a further boost.

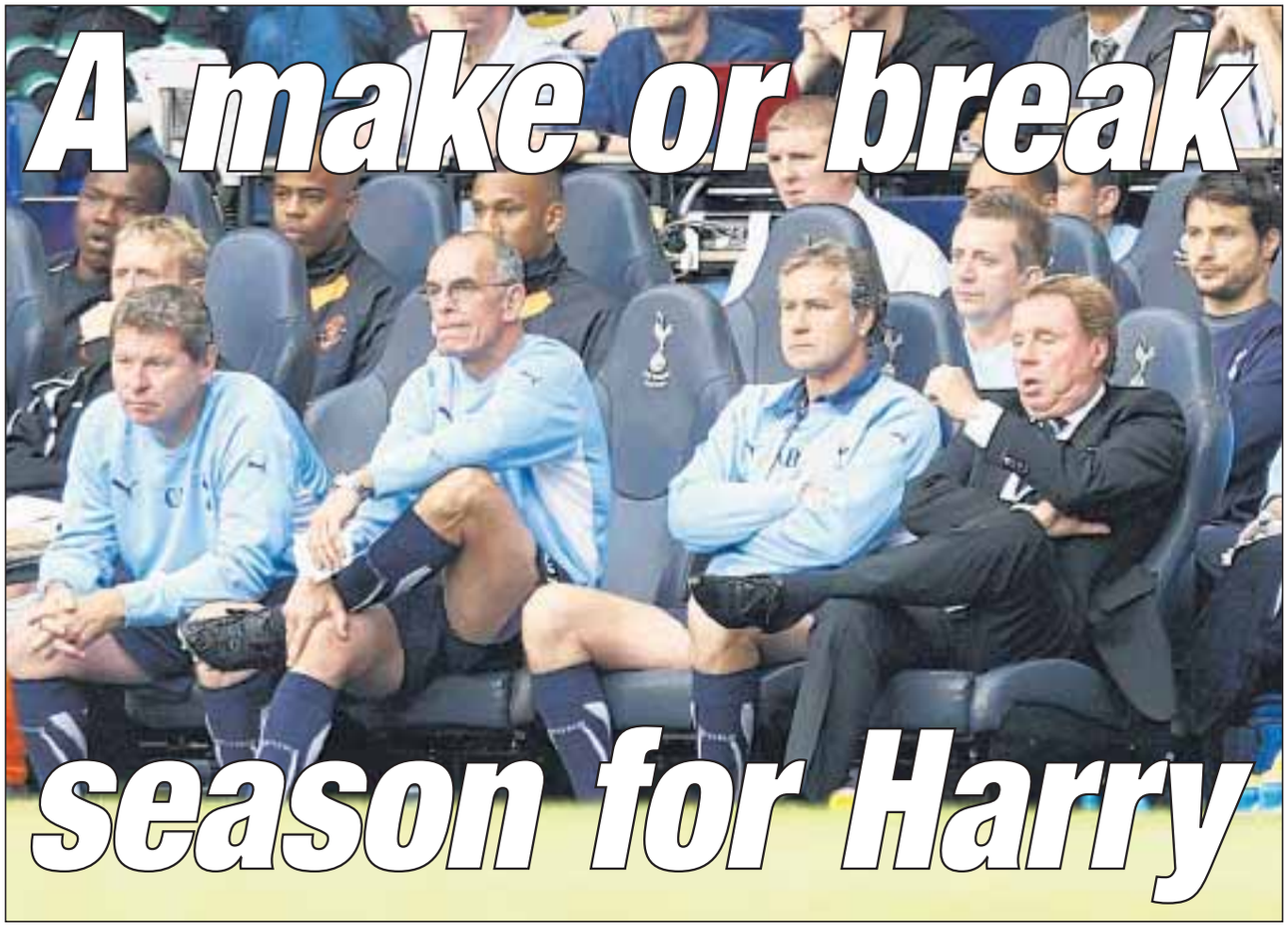
He said: "It was good enough last year and we have added five players to that, so I suggest it is."



TOUGH TIMES: Alan Pardew's pre-season preparations have been dominated recently by Joey Barton, left.

ALAN PARDEW'S FIRST MANAGERIAL JOB WAS AT READING IN 1999

Premiership Spotlight



A make or break season for Harry

AFTER almost three decades in football management, you would think Harry Redknapp would not be nervous about the 2011/12 ahead.

But he knows that he is about to begin a season that could either make or break his career, ***writes PAUL HIRST.***

Tottenham fans may have had the odd grumble at Redknapp, but in truth they could not have wished for a better run than they have had under the 64-year-old since he was appointed in 2008.

The former Saints boss has taken the club from the bottom of the Premier League to Champions League quarter-finalists within the space of two and a half years.

And he has done it with a team dedicated to playing pulsating football.

Last season supporters were treated to glamour ties against AC Milan, Real Madrid and Inter Milan, against whom they enjoyed their finest hour – a 3-1 victory at White Hart Lane in which another ex-Saint, Gareth Bale, made Maicon look as if he belonged on Hackney Marshes.

Redknapp was a victim of his own success, though, as he started to feel the heat towards the end of the campaign.

He clearly felt expectations had gone way above what he had hoped, lashing out at the "idiotic" minority of the club's own fans who criticised him for failing to secure Champions League qualification for the second successive year.

Now, after what has already been a turbulent summer thanks to the tug-of-war with Chelsea over Luka Modric, Redknapp faces up to a new season which could define his career and end with him being appointed England manager.

Huge blow

Roy Hodgson saw his chances of landing the post take a huge blow after a torrid spell at Liverpool, and Redknapp is aware that one bad season could do the same for him.

"Things are going okay but I've been in the game long enough to know it can turn as quickly as it can go well," Redknapp said. "One week you're a genius, winning games and are a fantastic manager, the next week you lose a few games and you don't know what you're doing."

The hurdles Redknapp has to negotiate to make sure that he does not suffer a hit to his reputation are numerous.

LUCA MODRIC

Firstly, the Modric standoff has to be resolved. The Croatian put in stellar performances last term but will not be able to do the same again if all he can think about is a move to Chelsea.

The next thing on Redknapp's to-do list is to get rid of up to six of his fringe players like David Bentley and Robbie Keane, who are preventing him from signing new faces.

Top of the list of imports has to be a strong target man capable of delivering 20 goals a season.

Had it not been for the excellent form of Rafael van der Vaart in the first half of the season, Spurs would have fallen way short, with Jermain Defoe, Roman Pavlyuchenko and Peter Crouch all failing to deliver.

The Europa League will almost certainly prove an annoying hindrance to the manager, whose critical comments about the competition mean that he is almost certain to use his second string in Europe.

Redknapp believes that one of the main reasons why Manchester City pipped Spurs to fourth last year was because they exited the Europa League in March and is aware a prolonged campaign in Europe will affect the club's chances of making the top four.

"You play Thursdays and Sundays most weeks in the Europa League, it is very difficult to concentrate and it makes the Premier League even harder," Redknapp said.

The fact that all the teams around Spurs have spent big this summer means a top-four finish could arguably be the greatest achievement of Redknapp's career, but he does have the squad to do it.

And should his team finish in the top four, he will not only be congratulated by chairman Daniel Levy, but may well get a call from the FA too, inviting him to take on the job he has dreamed about ever since he assumed his first role in management with Bournemouth some 28 years ago.

HARRY REDKNAPP'S FIRST MANAGERIAL JOB WAS CHERRIES IN 1983

The new kids on the block

PRESS Association reporter Carl Markham looks at the players who could make their breakthrough in the Barclays Premier League in 2011-12.

SHANE FERGUSON (Newcastle)

The defender joined the Magpies' academy at 16 from Derry City and made his first-team debut last August in the Carling Cup, winning his first Premier League appearance in January. He signed a new five-year contract in May and looks set to establish himself in the first-team squad this season.

EMMANUEL FRIMPONG (Arsenal)

The 19-year-old should have already had his breakthrough season but a cruciate ligament injury last August put paid to that. Along with Jack Wilshere, whose progress is well documented, the defensive midfielder starred at last summer's Emirates Cup and should make a belated first-team debut in the coming campaign.

BACK FROM INJURY: Emmanuel Frimpong, left.

GARY GARDNER (Aston Villa)

With new manager Alex McLeish looking to freshen up the side Gardner, brother of former Villa academy graduate Craig, could be the one to benefit. The midfielder returned from a serious knee injury late last year to put in some impressive performances for the reserves.

TOM EAVES (Bolton)

Signed from Oldham last summer, the 19-year-old striker spent last season in the reserves where his goalscoring tally reached double figures and he could well be integrated into the fringe of the first team this time around.

ANDROS TOWNSEND (Tottenham)

The winger scored on his first-team debut in the FA Cup third-round tie against Charlton in what many felt was a man-of-the-match performance. Has spent the last couple of years being loaned out to lower-league teams such as MK Dons and Yeovil, impressing latterly at Millwall.

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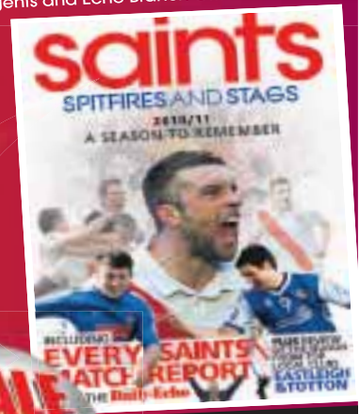

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Happy Smile Dental Practice
Flat 1 & 2, 10 Portland Street, Southampton SO14 7EB

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League 1 Spotlight

BOURNEMOUTH

Manager: Lee Bradbury
Position last season: 6th
Players in: Darryl Flahavan (Portsmouth, free), Adam Barrett (Crystal Palace, undisclosed), Steven Gregory (AFC Wimbledon, undisclosed), Scott Malone (Wolves, loan until January), Nathan Byrne (Tottenham, season loan)
Players out: Danny Hollands (Charlton, free), Ben Williamson (Hyde, free), Jason Pearce (Portsmouth, undisclosed), Rhoys Wiggins (Charlton, undisclosed), Ryan Garry (retired), Anton Robinson (Huddersfield, £250,000).
Key man: Danny Ings
Chances: Bournemouth's chances will depend on how they respond to last season's play-off semi-final defeat and if they can recreate last season's impressive home form. Another promotion push looks beyond them, though, with a mid-table finish much more likely.
Prediction: 15th

BRENTFORD

Manager: Uwe Rosler
Position last season: 11th
Players in: Shaleum Logan (Manchester City, free), Marcel Eger (St Pauli, free), Jonathan Douglas (Swindon, free), Clayton Donaldson (Crewe, free), Niall McGinn (Celtic, season loan), Harry Forrester (Aston Villa, free)
Players out: Stephen Wright (released), Lewis Grabban (Rotherham, free), Nicky Forster (retired), David Hunt (Crawley, free), David McCracken (St Johnstone, free), Chris Bush (AFC Wimbledon, free)
Key man: Clayton Donaldson
Chances: Rosler's appointment was a surprise but a few astute signings have come in and the Bees will fancy their chances of beating last season's mid-table finish.
Prediction: 9th

BURY

Manager: Richie Barker
Position last season: 2nd in League 2
Players in: Mark Hughes (North Queensland Fury, free), Mark Cullen (Hull, on loan until December 31)
Players out: Kyle Bennett (Doncaster, undisclosed), Nicky Ajose (Peterborough, £300,000)
Key man: Ryan Lowe
Chances: The Shakers are a small fish in a big pond this season, competing against clubs with far bigger budgets. Even Lowe's goals may struggle to keep them out of relegation danger.
Prediction: 22nd

CARLISLE

Manager: Greg Abbott
Position last season: 12th
Players in: Andy Welsh (Yeovil, free), Stephen O'Halloran (Coventry, free), Jon-Paul McGovern (Swindon, free), Liam Noble (Sunderland, six-month loan)
Players out: Kevan Hurst (Walsall, free), Marc-Antoine Gbarssin, Jason Price, Scott Dobie, Tony Caig, Steven Swinglehurst, Nahki Wells, Ryan Bowman (all released)
Key man: Peter Murphy
Chances: Blew hot and cold last season with their League One challenge perhaps distracted by their JPT triumph. Abbott has been able to keep his better players this summer and has added the likes of Welsh, O'Halloran and McGovern, so a top-10 finish beckons.
Prediction: 7th

CHARLTON

Manager: Chris Powell
Position last season: 13th
Players in: Danny Hollands (Bournemouth, free), John Sullivan (Millwall, free), Bradley Pritchard (Hayes & Yeading, free) Nick Pope (Bury Town, free), Paul Hayes (Preston, free), Cedric Evina (Oldham, free), Mikel Alonso (Tenerife, free), Matt Taylor (Exeter, free), Ruben Bover (Halesowen, free), Dale Stephens (Oldham, undisclosed), Danny Green (Dagenham, free), Rhoys Wiggins (Bournemouth, undisclosed), Michael Morrison (Sheffield Wednesday, undisclosed), Ben Hamer (Reading, undisclosed), Andy Hughes (Scunthorpe, free)
Players out: Christian Dailly, Jon Fortune, Kyel Reid, Alex Stavrinou, Michael Stewart, Tamer Tuna, Kelly Youga (all released), Therry Racon (Millwall, free), Ross Worner (Aldershot, free), Carl Jenkinson (Arsenal, £1million), Jose Semedo (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Joe Anyinsah (Bristol Rovers, free), Miguel Llera (Blackpool, free), Alan McCormack (Swindon, undisclosed)
Key man: Bradley Wright-Phillips
Chances: Rookie manager Powell has been backed in the transfer market but is under pressure to get off to a good start with the club's new owners expecting promotion.
Prediction: 4th

CHESTERFIELD

Manager: John Sheridan
Position last season: 1st in League 2
Players in: Mark Randall (Arsenal, free), Nathan Smith (Yeovil, free)
Players out: Ian Breckin, Shane Redmond (both released), Craig Davies (Barnsley, £700,000)
Key man: Dean Morgan
Chances: Were promoted at a canter but without Deane Smalley – now with Oxford after his loan to the Spireites from Oldham came to an end - and Craig Davies the Spireites have lost the best part of 40 goals. That will be tough to replace but they should stay up – just.
Prediction: 20th

COLCHESTER

Manager: John Ward
Position last season: 10th
Players in: Michael Rose (Swindon, free), Tom Eastman (Ipswich, free), Karl Duguid (Plymouth, free)
Players out: Simon Hackney (Rochdale, free), David Perkins (Barnsley, free), Medy Elito (Dagenham & Redbridge, free), Lee Beevers (Walsall, free), Morten Knudsen, Conor Powell, Sam Corcoran (all released)
Key man: Ian Henderson
Chances: After following up their eighth-placed finish in 2009-10 with 10th last season, the Us will desperately be looking to climb into that top six but it will not be easy among another tough line-up in League One.
Prediction: 14th

EXETER

Manager: Paul Tisdale
Position last season: 8th
Players in: Guillem Bauza (Northampton, free), Danny Coles (Bristol Rovers, free), Lenny Pidgeley (Bradford, free), Callum McNish (unattached), Nicholas Bignall (Reading, loan)
Players out: James Norwood (Forest Green, free), Joe Heath (Hereford, free), Paul Jones (Peterborough, free), Jamie Cureton (Leyton Orient, free), Ben Watson, Jake Thomson, Matt Armstrong-Ford, Noah Keats, Dan Western, Kyle Bassett (all released), Rob Edwards, Marcus Stewart, Andrew Marriott, Paul Tisdale, Bertrand Cozic (all retired), Matt Taylor (Charlton, free)
Key man: John O'Flynn
Chances: Another push for the play-offs looks within reach, especially after a summer of canny recruitment, though they have lost top scorer Jamie Cureton and skipper Matt Taylor.
Prediction: 10th

HARTLEPOOL

Manager: Mick Wadsworth
Position last season: 16th
Players in: Nathan Luscombe (Sunderland, free), Nolberto Solano (Hull, free), James Poole (Manchester City, undisclosed), Colin Nish (Hibernian, free), Jack Baldwin (Faversham, undisclosed)
Players out: Armann Bjornsson, Billy Greulich, Michael Mackay, Dylan Purvis, Fabian Yantorno (all released), Leon McSweeney (Leyton Orient, free), Joe Gamble (Limerick, free), Denis Behan (Limerick, free)
Key man: Antony Sweeney
Chances: The arrival of Solano in the summer has given Hartlepool a boost, while Sweeney has signed a new deal and manager Wadsworth has also added Poole, Luscombe and Nish to his squad. Pools finished 16th last season but look strong enough to avoid any relegation threat.
Prediction: 11th

HUDDERSFIELD

Manager: Lee Clark
Position last season: 3rd
Players in: Calum Woods (Dunfermline, free), Oscar Gobern (Southampton, tribunal), Donal McDermott (Manchester City, tribunal), Tommy Miller (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Liam Cooper (Hull, season loan), Danny Ward (Bolton, undisclosed), Damien Johnson (Plymouth, season loan), Anton Robinson (Bournemouth, £250,000).
Players out: Lee Peltier (Leicester, undisclosed), Leigh Franks (released), Anthony Pilkington (Norwich, undisclosed), Chris Atkinson (Darlington, loan until January)
Key man: Gary Roberts
Chances: Clark will be under more pressure to secure Championship football for the Terriers after their play-off final defeat in May, but despite losing key players Pilkington and Peltier, a host of new signings will add fresh impetus to keep them in touch with the early pace-setters. Could finally be their year.
Prediction: 2nd

LEYTON ORIENT

Manager: Russell Slade
Position last season: 7th
Players in: Scott Cuthbert (Swindon, free), Leon McSweeney (Hartlepool, free), Jamie Cureton (Exeter, free), Marc Laird (Millwall, free), David Mooney (Reading, free)
Players out: Ryan Jarvis, Harry Beautyman (both released), Aaron Brown (Aldershot, free), Andrew Whing (Oxford, free), Adam Chambers (Walsall, free), Scott McGleish (Bristol Rovers, free)
Key man: Stephen Dawson
Chances: The Os over-achieved last season, narrowly missing out on a play-off place and memorably drawing with Arsenal in the FA Cup. A repeat looks unlikely but Slade's side can match anyone on their day.
Position last season: 12th

MK DONS

Manager: Karl Robinson
Position last season: 5th
Players in: Dean Bowditch (Yeovil, free) Darren Potter (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Jay O'Shea (Birmingham, free), Ian McLoughlin (Ipswich, free), Angelo Balanta (QPR, loan)
Players out: Sean O'Hanlon, Danny Woodwards, Jude Stirling, Stuart Searle (released), Peter Leven (Oxford, free)
Key man: Stephen Gleeson
Chances: Another defeat in the play-offs left the Dons as nearly men again. However, they may once again need the end-of-season lot-

Victims of

CHERRIES manager Lee Bradbury saw another key performer fly the nest and then admitted: "We have become victims of our own success."

Bradbury's resources were further weakened ahead of the 2010/11 campaign when influential midfielder Anton Robinson completed his move to Cherries' League One rivals Huddersfield Town.

The 25-year-old joined the Terriers for an undisclosed fee – believed to have been in the region of £250,000 – and penned a three-year deal at the Galpharm Stadium.

He had been an integral member of the Cherries squad since moving to Dean Court for a nominal fee from Weymouth in January 2009, his former club set to receive around £5,000 from the move.

Huddersfield boss Lee Clark swooped for Robinson after the Londoner, who had a short spell with Eastleigh a few years ago, had impressed for Cherries in four meetings with the west Yorkshire outfit last season.

Robinson starred in both legs as Cherries suffered an agonising penalty shootout exit at the hands of the Terriers in the League One play-off semi-final in May.

He became the sixth member of that squad to leave – joining Jason Pearce, Rhoys Wiggins, Danny Hollands and loan pair Adam Smith and Donal McDermott.

As a result, Cherries will have to perform another miracle if they want to repeat last season's promotion challenge.

"I understand this is the way football is, but, sometimes, you are the victims of your own success," said the former Portsmouth striker.

"We didn't get promoted. If we had, maybe the players would have been happy and fine.

"But we didn't and some of those lads showcased themselves week in, week out and did superbly.

"Of course other clubs are going to be interested.

"It is a shame to lose these players because you get a bond with them. You start to get to know them very well, both as a player and a person, and then they move on.

"But that is football and you can't keep the same squad forever. It is how you react to these losses and you will be judged on the people you bring in."

Bradbury, meanwhile, was quick to dismiss the notion of some supporters that the players had been mercenaries for moving simply for the money.

He added: "If the people saying that were to put themselves in the shoes of the players, I am

ANTON ROBINSON

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League 1 Spotlight

our success

sure they would probably all do the same.

"All the time those players were at the club, they gave their all.

"They all gave 100 per cent for AFC Bournemouth and you can't ask any more than that.

"If a Championship club or one of the big payers in League One comes in then the lads are going to be attracted. It is only natural."

Commenting on Robinson's signing, Terriers Clark said: "Anton is a top quality performer with proven pedigree at League One level.

"His ability was plain for all to see in our four clashes with Bournemouth last season and his acquisition is a real coup for the club."

Robinson, whose contract with Cherries had been due to expire next summer, would have been entitled to walk away for nothing in 12 months.

SSSSSSSSSSSS

MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER: Sheffield United boss Danny Wilson

NO manager in League One will be under closer scrutiny this season than Danny Wilson.

When the 51-year-old, a former player and manager of Sheffield Wednesday, was unveiled as Sheffield United's new boss at Bramall Lane in May, chants of 'We Hate Wilson' and 'Wilson Out' could be heard outside in the stadium car park.

Had he not known it before, several hundred Blades fans who had gathered in protest made it quickly apparent that Wilson was facing the biggest challenge of his managerial career.

"I knew it wasn't going to be smooth-seas sailing in here," said Wilson. "But, as those who know me will say, I'm a very determined character."

Wilson added: "Of course you'd rather have people on side. But that only makes me even more determined, and surely everyone deserves a chance?

"Hopefully we'll be able to bring results in the style of football that I'm accustomed to."

Wilson, whose new club will face old foes Wednesday in third-tier action this season for the first time since 1979, added: "There's a great tradition and great rivalry here and I know as well as anybody having lived in the area for 25 years, so I know what the clubs mean to the people of Sheffield."

tery with Robinson's men coming up short for an automatic push.
Prediction: 6th

NOTTS COUNTY

Manager: Martin Allen
Position last season: 19th
Players in: Alan Sheehan (Swindon, free), Jude Stirling (MK Dons), Julian Kelly (Reading, free), Ishmel Demontagnac (Blackpool, free), Hamza Bencherif (Macclesfield, free), Jeff Hughes (Bristol Rovers, free), Charlie Allen (Dagenham & Redbridge, free)
Players out: David Grof, Kevin Smith, Alan Gow, Febian Brandy, Graeme Lee, Njogu Demba-Nyren (all released)
Key man: Neal Bishop
Chances: Allen expects big things from his side in his first full season as manager. Some astute signings have strengthened the squad but anything more than a top-half finish would represent over-achievement.
Prediction: 13th

OLDHAM

Manager: Paul Dickov
Position last season: 17th
Players in: Jean-Yves M'Voto (Sunderland, free), Alex Cisak (Accrington, undisclosed), Zander Diamond (Aberdeen, free), Matt Smith (Solihull Moors, undisclosed)
Players out: Reuben Hazell (Shrewsbury, free), Cedric Evina (Charlton, free), Dale Stephens (Charlton, undisclosed), Lewis Alessandra (Morecambe, free), Dean Brill (released), Andy Todd (released), Ritchie Jones (Bradford, free), Deane Smalley (Oxford, undisclosed), Josh Ollerenshaw (released), Rod McDonald (released), Warren Feeney (Plymouth, free)
Key man: Jean-Yves M'Voto
Chances: Dickov found life tough in his debut season in management but he has shipped out a number of players and will hope for increased competitiveness among his squad.
Prediction: 19th

PRESTON

Manager: Phil Brown
Position last season: 22nd in the Championship
Players in: Clarke Carlisle (Burnley, season loan), Graham Alexander (Burnley, free), Brian McLean (unattached)
Players out: Billy Jones (West Brom, free), Sean St Ledger (Leicester, undisclosed), Paul Hayes (Charlton, free), Chris Brown (Doncaster, free); Neal Trotman (Rochdale, free), Andy Lonergan (Leeds, undisclosed), Keith Treacy (Burnley, undisclosed)
Key man: Neil Mellor
Chances: Brown could not save Preston from relegation last season but will be expected to guide his men into the play-offs as a bare minimum.
Prediction: 3rd

ROCHDALE

Manager: Steve Eyre
Position last season: 9th
Players in: Ashley Grimes (Millwall, free), Simon Hackney (Colchester, free), Marc Twaddle (Falkirk, free), Stephen Darby (Liverpool, season loan), Neal Trotman (Preston, free), Paul Marshall (unattached).
Players out: Matt Done, Scott Wiseman (both Barnsley, undisclosed), Matt Flynn, Robbie Williams (released), Owain Fon Williams (Tranmere, free), Anthony Elding (Grimsby, undisclosed)
Key man: Gary Jones
Chances: Keith Hill quit Dale to join Barnsley in the summer and took key defenders Done and Wiseman with him. New boss Eyre has drafted in five new players, including Darby on loan from Liverpool, but could struggle to keep Dale in touch with the play-off chasers.
Position last season: 23rd

SCUNTHORPE

Manager: Alan Knill
Position last season: 24th in the Championship
Players in: Jordan Robertson (St Johnstone, free), Jimmy Ryan (Accrington, undisclosed), Andy Barcham (Gillingham, free)
Players out: Rory Coleman, Johnathan Williams, Paris Cowan-Hall (all released), Ian Morris (Torquay, free), Josh Wright (released), David Mirfin (Watford, free), Joe Murphy (Coventry, free), Rob Jones (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Andy Hughes (Charlton, free)
Key man: Jimmy Ryan
Chances: Knill is an impressive young boss and will be quietly confident of a promotion push.
Prediction: 8th

SHEFFIELD UNITED

Manager: Danny Wilson
Position last season: 23rd in the Championship
Players in: Jean-Francois Lescinel (Swindon, free), Danny Philliskirk (Chelsea, undisclosed), Chris Porter (Derby, free), Ryan Flynn (Falkirk, free)
Players out: Jamie Ward (Derby, undisclosed), Darius Henderson (Milwall, undisclosed), Kingsley James (Port Vale, free), Phil Roe (Port Vale, free), Mark Yeates (Watford, undisclosed)
Key man: Chris Morgan
Chances: Former Sheffield Wednesday favourite Wilson was not the most popular of appointments to replace Micky Adams, but knows what it takes to win promotion.
Prediction: 5th

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

Manager: Gary Megson
Position last season: 15th
Players in: David Prutton (Swindon, free), Rob Jones (Scunthorpe, free), Julian Bennett (Nottingham Forest, free), Jose Semedo (Charlton, free), Danny Batth (Wolves, loan until January)
Players out: Tommy Miller (Huddersfield, free), Paul Heffernan (Kilmarnock, free), Tommy Spurr (Doncaster, £200,000), Gary Teale (St Mirren, free), Michael Morrison (Charlton, undisclosed)
Key man: David Prutton
Chances: Megson has assembled a big, powerful side as he embarks on his first full season in charge and summer signings Prutton and Semedo add a touch of class in midfield required to challenge for promotion, with a top-two finish certainly within their grasp. It would be no great surprise if they won the title.
Prediction: 1st

STEVENAGE

Manager: Graham Westley
Position last season: 7th in League 2 (promoted via the play-offs)
Players in: Guy Madjo (unattached), Alan Julian (Gillingham, free), Phil Edwards (Accrington, free), Jennison Myrie-Williams (unattached), Robin Shroot (unattached)
Players out: Ashley Bayes (Basingstoke, free), Luke Foster (Rotherham, free), Yemi Odubade (Gateshead, free), Charlie Griffin (Forest Green, free)
Key man: Darius Charles
Chances: In the third tier for the first time in their history after play-off success in May, it may prove a step too far for Boro. Solid at the back but could struggle up front.
Prediction: 16th

TRANMERE

Manager: Les Parry
Position last season: 17th
Players in: Owain Fon Williams (Rochdale, free), Danny Holmes (The New Saints, free), Vinicius Dantas (Azuza Pacific, free)
Players out: Aaron Cresswell (Ipswich, tribunal), Dale Jennings (Bayern Munich, undisclosed), Alan Mahon, Marlon Broomes, Max Blanchard, Joe Collister, Nick Wood, Ryan Fraughan, Sam Morrow, Jack Mackreth (all released).
Key man: Vinicius Dantas
Chances: Tranmere operate with one of the smallest budgets in the division and mere survival would represent success. That could be a bridge too far this season.
Prediction: 21st

WALSALL

Manager: Dean Smith
Position last season: 20th
Players in: Kevan Hurst (Carlisle, free), Claude Gnakpa (Luton, free), Mat Sadler (Watford, free), Adam Chambers (Leyton Orient, free), Ryan Jarvis (Leyton Orient, free), Lee Beevers (Colchester, free), David Grof (unattached), Anton Peterlin (unattached)
Players out: Clayton McDonald (Port Vale, free), Jonny Brain, Aaron Lescott, Steve Jones, Darren Byfield, Paul Marshall, Tom Williams, Alex Hickman, Sean Geddes, Emmanuel Ledesma (all released)
Key man: Andy Butler
Chances: Having narrowly avoided relegation on the final day of last term, manager Dean Smith – in his first full season at the helm – will likely settle for the 10th, 13th and 12th-placed finishes of previous campaigns.
Prediction: 18th

WYCOMBE

Manager: Gary Waddock
Position last season: 3rd in League 2
Players in: Ben Harding (Aldershot, free), Joel Grant (Crewe, free), Scott Donnelly (Swansea, loan), John Halls (Aldershot, free), Elliot Benyon (Swindon, free), James Tunnicliffe (Brighton, free)
Players out: Sam Belcher, Dan Fitchett, Stuart Green, Alan Bennett, Jerome Federico (all released), Lewis Montrose (Gillingham, free), Keiran Murtagh, Chris Westwood (released), Jon-Paul Pittman (Oxford, free)
Key man: Scott Rendell
Chances: Sealed an immediate return to the third tier but Wanderers may continue to yo-yo between League One and League Two and struggle again. Survival would be seen as an achievement.
Prediction:17th

YEOVIL

Manager: Terry Skiverton
Position last season: 14th
Players in: Bondz N'Gala (Plymouth, free), Kieran Agard (Everton, free), Anthony Edgar (West Ham, free), Dominic Blizzard (Bristol Rovers, free), Curtis Haynes-Brown (Lowestoft Town, undisclosed), Steve MacLean (Plymouth, free), Rory Fallon (Plymouth, free), Jon Obika (Spurs, loan)
Players out: Dean Bowditch (MK Dons, free), Alex Russell (released), Craig Alcock (Peterborough, free), Nathan Smith (released), Adam Virgo (Bristol Rovers, free), Andrew Tuttle (released), Andy Welsh (Carlisle, free)
Key man: Bondz N'Gala
Chances: A season of struggle could be on the cards for Yeovil as they have lost a lot of quality players over the summer. N'Gala will provide a solid presence, but the former Plymouth man will need help.
Prediction: 24th
Compiled by the Press Association.

INS AND OUTS IN LEAGUE TWO – TURN OVER TO PAGES 22 & 23

League 2 Spotlight

ACCRINGTON

Manager: John Coleman
Position last season: 5th
Players in: Danny Coid (Blackpool, free), Kevin McIntyre (Shrewsbury, free), Kurtis Guthrie (unattached), Sean Murdoch (unattached), Kern Miller (Barnsley, loan until January)
Players out: Andy Parkinson, Rory Boulding, Chris Turner, Zak Riley, Andy Owens, Tom Smyth (all released), Jimmy Ryan (Scunthorpe, undisclosed), Alex Cisak (Oldham, undisclosed), Jonny Bateson (Macclesfield, free), Sean McConville (Stockport, free), Joe Jacobson (Shrewsbury, free), Phil Edwards (Stevenage, free)
Key man: Andy Procter
Chances: John Coleman has performed small miracles and last season guided them into the play-offs. After a raft of departures, similar success could prove hard to come by this term.
Prediction: 14th

AFC WIMBLEDON

Manager: Terry Brown
Position last season: 2nd in Conference (promoted via play-offs)
Players in: Max Porter (Rushden & Diamonds, free), Jack Midson (Oxford, free), Charles Ademeno (Grimsby, free), Chris Bush (Brentford, free), Mat Mitchel-King (Crewe, free), Gareth Gwillim (Dagenham, free)
Players out: Ismail Yakubu, Ed Harris, Jon Main, Mark Mwokeji, Delano Sam-Yorke (all released), Danny Kedwell (Gillingham, undisclosed), Kaid Mohamed (Cheltenham, free) Steven Gregory (Bournemouth, undisclosed)
Key man: Jamie Stuart
Chances: Kedwell and Gregory are big losses but they should have enough about them to survive.
Prediction: 19th

ALDERSHOT

Manager: Dean Holdsworth
Position last season: 14th
Players in: Michael Rankine (York, free), Aaron Brown (Leyton Orient, free), Jamie Collins (Newport, free), Ross Worner (Charlton, free), Bradley Bubb (Farnborough, undisclosed), Anthony Pulis (Saints, free), Graeme Montgomery (unattached)
Players out: Marvin Morgan, Tim Sills, Wade Small, Jack Randall, Clayton Fortune, Mikhael Jaimez Ruiz (all released), Ben Harding (Wycombe, free), John Halls (Wycombe, free), Max Worsfold and Jordan Clement (both Maidenhead, free)
Key man: Michael Rankine
Chances: Holdsworth embarks on his first full season and he will see no reason why his Aldershot side cannot make a case for promotion. Much will depend on the form of striker Rankine, who will be expected to replace Marvin Morgan.
Prediction: 13th

BARNET

Manager: Lawrie Sanchez
Position last season: 22nd
Players in: Sam Deering (Oxford, free), Mark Byrne (Nottingham Forest, free), Danny Senda, Dean Brill (both unattached)
Players out: Glen Southam, Jake Cole, Rossi Jarvis, Charlie Stimson, Danny Kelly, Reece Yorke (all released), Joe Devera (Swindon, free)
Key man: Izale McLeod
Chances: Perennial relegation battlers look set to struggle again, although if strike duo of McLeod and Steve Kabba find their scoring boots they should be okay.
Prediction: 18th

BRADFORD

Manager: Peter Jackson
Position last season: 19th
Players in: Ross Hannah (Matlock, free), Guy Branston (Torquay, free), Chris Mitchell (Falkirk, free), Mark Stewart (Falkirk, free), Scott Brown (Clyde, free), Patrick Lacey (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Nialle Rodney (Nottingham Forest, free), Ritchie Jones (Oldham, free), Andrew Burns (Bolton, free)
Players out: Omar Daley, Gareth Evans, Jon Worthington, Shane Duff, Lenny Pidgeley, Chib Chilaka, Lloyd Saxton, Ryan Harrison, Louis Horne, Chris Elliott (all released), Jake Speight (Wrexham, undisclosed)
Key man: Guy Branston
Chances: Manager Peter Jackson has had a clear-out, with 11 players leaving and nine new ones arriving. He intends to restore some pride by launching a play-off challenge after successive seasons at the wrong end of the table.
Prediction: 12th

BRISTOL ROVERS

Manager: Paul Buckle
Position last season: 22nd in League One
Players in: Matt Gill (Norwich, free), Scott Bevan (Torquay, free), Craig Stanley (Morecambe, undisclosed), Matt Harrold (Shrewsbury, undisclosed), Lee Brown (QPR, free), Mustapha Carayol (Lincoln, undisclosed), Scott McGleish (Leyton Orient, free), Chris Zebroski (Torquay, undisclosed), Joe Anyinsah (Charlton, free), Lance Cronin (Gillingham, free), Michael Smith (Ballymena United, undisclosed), Cian Bolger (Leicester, six-month loan), Michael Boateng (Carshalton, free)
Players out: Jeff Hughes, Mike Green, Darryl Duffy, Carl Regan, Danny Senda, Gavin Williams, JP Kalala, Jerel Ifil, Ashley Bowle, Sam Butler, Jack Camm, Alex Hoyle, Robbi Maggs, Lewis Parker, Tyrone Rhoden, Tom Seery, Jordan Tillson, Dominic Blizzard (all released), Will Hoskins (Brighton, undisclosed), Danny Coles (Exeter, free), Harry Pell (Hereford, free)
Key man: Chris Zebroski
Chances: A huge squad overhaul has been performed by new boss Paul Buckle and if he can get his new players to gel quickly, then they should be automatic promotion candidates.
Prediction: 4th

BURTON

Manager: Paul Peschisolido
Position last season: 20th
Players in: Cleveland Taylor (St Johnstone, free), Chris Palmer (Gillingham, free), Adi Yussef (unattached).
Players out: Adam Legzdins (Derby, undisclosed), Lewis Young (Northampton, free), Richard Walker, Richard Jackson, Keith Gilroy, Garyn Preen (all released), Russell Penn (Cheltenham, free)
Key man: Greg Pearson
Chances: Albion survived a season of struggle last time, although they were not helped by a back-log of fixtures following postponements during winter. Player of the year Adam Legzdins will be missed and goals could be a problem.
Prediction: 17th

CHELTENHAM

Manager: Mark Yates
Position last season: 17th
Players in: Marlon Pack (Portsmouth, free), Russell Penn (Burton, free), Alan Bennett (Wycombe, free), Kaid Mohamed (AFC Wimbledon, free), Sido Jombati (Bath City, undisclosed), Darryl Duffy (Bristol Rovers, free), Bagasan Graham (unattached), Harry Hooman (unattached), Luke Summerfield (Plymouth, free)
Players out: JJ Melligan, Frankie Artus, Martin Riley, Daniel Lloyd-Weston, Jake Lee (all released), Wes Thomas (Crawley, free)
Key man: Russell Penn
Chances: Yates has recruited wisely and has formed a squad that should improve on last season's lower mid-table finish. Whether they can make a charge on the top seven depends largely on their form away from home.
Prediction: 15th

CRAWLEY

Manager: Steve Evans
Position last season: 1st in Conference
Players in: Wes Thomas (Cheltenham, free), Scott Davies (Reading, free), John Akinde (Bristol City, undisclosed), Jamie Day (Rushden & Diamonds, undisclosed), Hope Akpan (Everton, free), Tyrone Barnett (Macclesfield, undisclosed)
Players out: Nick Jordan, Danny Hall, Sam Rents, Jamie Cook, Craig McAllister, Steve Masterton, Tommy Brewer, Simon Rusk (all released), James Dance (Luton, undisclosed)
Key man: John Akinde
Chances: It seems the only thing that can stop League Two's big spenders is the pressure of being expected to tear through the division at the first attempt.
Prediction: 1st

CREWE

Manager: Dario Gradi
Position last season: 10th
Players in: Alan Martin (unattached)
Players out: Calvin Zola, Patrick Ada, Mat Mitchel-King, Danny Blanchett, Lewis Short, Ashley Westwood, Bartek Fogler (all released), Joel Grant (Wycombe, free), Clayton Donaldson (Brentford, free)
Key man: Steve Phillips
Chances: Dario Gradi continues to ensure Crewe punch above their weight but a host of summer departures could hinder their hopes of building on last season's 10th-placed finish.
Prediction: 11th

DAGENHAM & RED

Manager: John Still
Position last season: 21st in League One
Players in: Medy Elito (Colchester, free), Richard Rose, Luke Howell, Kevin Maher, Sam Williams (all unattached)
Players out: Bas Savage (Northampton, free), Phil Ifil, Graeme Montgomery, Tommy Tejan-Sie (all released), Danny Green (Charlton, undisclosed), Charlie Allen (Notts County, free), Gareth Gwillim (AFC Wimbledon, free), Romain Vincelot (Brighton, undisclosed)
Key man: Jon Nurse
Chances: Having been relegated from League One last term, another season of struggle could be on the cards for the Daggers having lost the services of key performers Danny Green and Romain Vincelot.
Prediction: 20th

GILLINGHAM

Manager: Andy Hessenthaler
Position last season: 8th
Players in: Chris Whelpdale (Peterborough, free), Ross Flitney (Dover, free), Matt Fish (Dover, free), Charlie Lee (Peterborough, free), Danny Kedwell (AFC Wimbledon, undisclosed), Andy Frampton (Millwall, free), Lewis Montrose (Wycombe, free), Adam Birchall (Dover, undisclosed), Paolo Gazzaniga (unattached)
Players out: Adebayo Akinfenwa (Northampton, free), Chris Palmer (Burton, free), Alan Julian (Stevenage, free), Andy Barcham (Scunthorpe, free), Lance Cronin, Mark Bentley, Josh Gowling, John Nutter, Tony Sinclair, Andy White, Mark McCammon (all released)
Key man: Danny Kedwell
Chances: The loss of last season's three top scorers – Adebayo Akinfenwa, Andy Barcham and Cody McDonald, who returned to Norwich on a season-long loan spell, as well as goalkeeper Alan Julian and assistant manager Ian

Robins so

PAOLO Di Canio insists getting to grips with lower-league football in England has presented few problems for him as he looks to plot Swindon's immediate promotion from npower League Two.

The passionate Italian, right, captured the football world's attention back in May when he was appointed as the new manager at the County Ground, just weeks after Town had finished bottom of League One.

Di Canio spent his playing career at the very top level of the game with the likes of Lazio, Juventus, AC Milan, Celtic and West Ham, winning a Serie A title, the UEFA Cup and European Super Cup along the way.

It will be a very different story this season as he comes up against the likes of Crawley, AFC Wimbledon and Barnet in what is his first venture into the dugout.

Yet, with his coaching badges under his belt, Di Canio said: "All the time I tell people the football is the same, if you are an intelligent person the football is exactly the same in every league.

"It depends what you expect from it. I'm not the kind of manager to be frustrated watching my players make a mistake because obviously I can't think at the moment I have Premier League players, for this league they are absolutely fantastic players because a lot of them have already experienced the top level.

"So I'm not worried, because I know to become a good manager you must handle the situation you have in front of you.

"I know this league because since I got the job I have watched about 12-14 games, it's not (the case that) because you've never played in League Two or League One you don't know football.

"It takes two hours to understand exactly

WENDY GEE'S IN-DEPTH NON LEAGUE COVERAGE STARTS ON PAGE 32

League 2 Spotlight

reliant on Paolo

what's going on. I also watched 16 games from League One just to know exactly the players I have now in my squad.

"So I know straight away what's going on in the next few weeks.

"I know we will play at some grounds where you don't have a fantastic pitch and you have to play some way and not the other, it's not a problem because I'm sure I can help my players who are already very good to improve their quality, play together and try to win every game."

He continued: "I will spend 24 hours a day doing it because this is my job. I'm an ambitious manager so if I want to get results I know I have to be the first to work a lot."

The 43-year-old has so far gone about his business in impressive fashion, bringing in around a dozen new face, from home and abroad, including the appointment of summer signing and Namibia midfielder Oliver Risser as captain.

The noises coming out of the camp during pre-season, which included a demanding training set-up in Italy, have been very good and friendly results have been there to match.

But is it any real surprise given the visionary and technically brilliant footballer Di Canio was on his day?

His target is clear – to get back into League One at the first attempt.

"It will be very hard obviously because there are another 23 clubs who want to win," he said. "But I'm confident 100% about the players I've got here.

"We obviously have to improve a lot because there is a completely new dressing room, 10-12 new signings, and the players who remain here have a big ambition to win because they want to give something back to themselves, their family and especially to the supporters.

"They hurt them last year but they know they have a big chance to let the people forget what happened and think positives for the future."

Hendon, makes 2011-12 difficult to predict for Gills, but Hessenthaler has acted shrewdly in the transfer market.
Prediction: 5th

HEREFORD

Manager: Jamie Pitman
Position last season: 21st
Players in: Joe Heath (Exeter, free), Delroy Facey (Lincoln, free), Stefan Stam (Yeovil, free), Harry Pell (Bristol Rovers, free), Yoann Arquin (unattached)
Players out: Richard Rose, Sam Gwynne, Ryan Valentine, Daniel Stratford, Sam Malsom, Adrian Patulea, Aidan Thomas (all released)
Key man: Stuart Fleetwood
Chances: Following a dreadful start under Simon Davey last term young manager Pitman reversed Hereford's fortunes and guided the club to safety, but another season of struggle looms.
Prediction: 24th

MACCLESFIELD

Manager: Gary Simpson
Position last season: 15th
Players in: Scott Kay (Manchester City, free), Jonny Bateson (Accrington, free), Ben Tomlinson (Worksop, undisclosed), Arnaud Mendy (Derby, free), Tom Fisher (Stockport, free), Waide Fairhurst (Doncaster, undisclosed)
Players out: Paul Bolland (Mansfield, free), Izak Reid (Morecambe, undisclosed), Hamza Bencherif (Notts County, free), Tyrone Barnett (Crawley, undisclosed), Matt Lowe, Ricky Sappleton, Jason Beardsley (all released)
Key man: Arnaud Mendy
Chances: The Silkmen have endured more than their fair share of adversity in recent times but Gary Simpson steered his men to 15th last term. Further progress could be tough to attain.
Prediction: 22nd

MORECAMBE

Manager: Jim Bentley
Position last season: 21st
Players in: Kevin Ellison (Rotherham, free), Izak Reid (Macclesfield, undisclosed), Gary McDonald (Hamilton, free), Lewis Alessandra (Oldham, free), Danny Carlton (Bury, free), Shaun Routledge (unattached)
Players out: Craig Stanley (Bristol Rovers, undisclosed), Adam Rundle (Darlington, free), Scott Brown, Tony Capaldi, Gavin Clarke, Stuart Hendrie, Andy Holdsworth, Chris Shuker, Laurie Walker, Neil Wainwright, Chris Wraighte (all released), Paul Mullin (retired)
Key man: Kevin Ellison
Chances: Morecambe went backwards last season and boss Sammy McIlroy left, leaving Jim Bentley with a tough job.
Prediction: 23rd

NORTHAMPTON

Manager: Gary Johnson
Position last season: 17th
Players in: Byron Webster (Doncaster, free), Adebayo Akinfenwa (Gillingham, free), Seth Nana Ofori-Twumasi (Peterborough, free), Jake Robinson (free), Ben Tozer (Newcastle, free), Lewis Young (Burton, free), Nick McKoy (Kettering, free), Freddy Hall (Bermuda Hogges, free), Sam Walker (Chelsea, loan), Nicky Corker (free), Bas Savage (Dagenham, free), Ashley Westwood (unattached)
Players out: Leon McKenzie, Paul Rodgers, Marcus Hall, Abdul Osman, Francis Laurent, Courtney Herbert, Alex Konstantinou, Dean Beckwith, Seb Harris, Liam Davis (all released), Guillem Bauza (Exeter, free), Chris Dunn (Coventry, undisclosed), Billy McKay (Inverness)
Key man: Michael Jacobs
Chances: A busy summer at Sixfields could turn Town from strugglers to promotion contenders.
Prediction: 8th

OXFORD

Manager: Chris Wilder
Position last season: 12th
Players in: Tony Capaldi (Morecambe, free), Ryan James (Grays, free), Jon-Paul Pittman (Wycombe, free), Andrew Whing (Leyton Orient, free), Deane Smalley (Oldham, undisclosed), Michael Duberry (St Johnstone, free), Peter Leven (Mk Dons, free)
Players out: Djoumin Sangare, Mitchell Hanson (both released), Jack Midson (AFC Wimbledon, free), Simon Eastwood (Halifax, free), Matt Green (Mansfield, loan until December)
Key man: Tom Craddock
Chances: Oxford will be one of the strongest sides in the division after a very good summer of recruitment by Wilder, with a host of players coming in from higher divisions.
Prediction: 3rd

PLYMOUTH

Manager: Peter Reid
Position last season: 23rd in League One
Players in: Robbie Williams (Rochdale, free), Durrell Berry (Aston Villa, free), Jake Cole (Barnet, free), Luke Daley (Norwich, free), Warren Feeney (Oldham, free), Ben Gibson (Middlesbrough, loan)
Players out: Yannick Bolasie (Bristol City, undisclosed), Karl Duguid (Colchester, free), Chris Clark, Anton Peterlin, Krisztian Timar, Luke Summerfield (Cheltenham, free), Jim Paterson, Marcel Seip, Bondz N'Gala (Yeovil, free), Kari Arnason (released), Joe Mason (Cardiff, undisclosed), Rory Patterson (Linfield, season loan), Liam Dickinson (released), Damien Johnson (Huddersfield, season loan), Rory Fallon, Steve McLean (both Yeovil, free).
Key man: Simon Walton
Chances: Plymouth return to the bottom tier in turmoil, as they remain in administration and have seen more players leave than arrive over the summer. Manager Peter Reid must view anything other than relegation as a successful season.
Prediction: 21st

PORT VALE

Manager: Micky Adams
Position last season: 11th
Players in: Kingsley James (Sheffield United, free), Phil Roe (Sheffield United, free), Clayton McDonald (Walsall, free), Mike Green (AFC Totton, free), Ben Williamson (Bournemouth, free), Ryan Burge (Doncaster, free), Tom Pope (Rotherham, free)
Players out: Kris Taylor (Darlington, free), Matthew Bell (Mansfield, free), Ritchie Sutton (Mansfield, free)
Key man: Marc Richards
Chances: Micky Adams' return as manager towards the end of last season lifted the club. When he left for boyhood club Sheffield United in December 2010, Vale were promotion contenders. Expect them to be up there again.
Prediction: 7th

ROTHERHAM

Manager: Andy Scott
Position last season: 9th
Players in: Ben Pringle (Derby, free), Gareth Evans (Bradford, free), Luke Foster (Stevenage, free), Chris Holroyd (Brighton, free), Troy Brown (Ipswich, free), Lewis Grabban (Brentford, free), Danny Schofield (Millwall, free), Conrad Logan (Leicester, six-month loan)
Players out: Ian Thomas-Moore, Nick Fenton, Grant Darley, Stephen Brogan, Jamie Green, Luke Ashworth (all released), Kevin Ellison (Morecambe, free), Ryan Taylor (Bristol City, undisclosed), Nicky Law (Motherwell, free), Tom Pope (Port Vale, free)
Key man: Chris Holroyd
Chances: With prolific striker Adam Le Fondre unlikely to see out the season, the Millers will be looking to Chris Holroyd to fill his boots.
Prediction: 6th

SHREWSBURY

Manager: Graham Turner
Position last season: 4th
Players in: Joe Jacobson (Accrington, free), Reuben Hazell (Oldham, free), Marvin Morgan (Aldershot, free), Matt Richards (unattached)
Players out: Dave Raven (released), Kevin McIntyre (Accrington, free), Craig Disley, Danny Taylor, Nathan Elder, Harry Hooman (all released), Jake Robinson (Northampton, free), Matt Harrold (Bristol Rovers, undisclosed)
Key man: Jon Taylor
Chances: Shrewsbury limped out of the play-offs having finished one point behind automatic promotion last season, and despite a mediocre summer in the transfer market, expect them to once again be in contention.
Prediction: 2nd

SOUTHEND

Manager: Paul Sturrock
Position last season: 13th
Players in: Neil Harris (Millwall, free), Jemal Johnson (Lokomotiv Sofia, free), Alassane N'Diaye (Crystal Palace, season loan), Ryan Leonard (unattached), Liam Dickinson (unattached)
Players out: Rhys Evans, Miguel Comminges, Adam Bouzid, Johnny Herd, Louie Soares (all released)
Key man: Neil Harris
Chances: Southend drifted out of play-off contention last season in Paul Sturrock's first campaign in charge, but Neil Harris should score plenty of goals at this level and could prove the difference this time around.
Prediction: 10th

SWINDON

Manager: Paolo Di Canio
Position last season: 24th in League One
Players in: Joe Devera (Barnet, free), Jonathan Smith (York, undisclosed), Oliver Risser (KuPS, free), Raffaele De Vita (Livingston, free), Alberto Comazzi (Spezia, free), Mattia Lanzano (USD Gavorrana 1930, free), Alan Connell (Grimsby, undisclosed), Mehdi Kerrouche (Al-Oruba, free), Alessandro Cibocchi (Portosummaga, free), Alan McCormack (Charlton, undisclosed)
Players out: Michael Rose (Colchester, free), David Prutton (Sheffield Wednesday, free), Scott Cuthbert (Leyton Orient, free), Alan Sheehan (Notts County, free), Jonathan Douglas (Brentford, free), Elliot Benyon (Wycombe, season loan)
Key man: Oliver Risser
Chances: With Paolo Di Canio now in charge and a raft of new faces, optimism is high and a promotion charge likely.
Prediction: 9th

TORQUAY

Manager: Martin Ling
Position last season: 7th
Players in: Joe Oastler (QPR, free), Brian Saah (Cambridge, undisclosed), Robert Olejnik (Falkirk, undisclosed), Daniel Leadbitter (Newcastle, free), Chris McPhee (Kidderminster, free), Martin Rice (Truro, free), Ian Morris (Scunthorpe, free), Taiwo Atieno (unattached).
Players out: Danny Potter (Newport, free), Scott Bevan (Bristol Rovers, free), Guy Branston (Bradford, free), Chris Zebroski (Bristol Rovers, undisclosed)
Key man: Eunan O'Kane
Chances: Torquay's play-off final defeat last season saw them lose manager Paul Buckle and several key players so it will be a big ask of Martin Ling to repeat last season's fine achievements. A mid-table finish looks likely.
Prediction: 16th
Compiled by the Press Association.

FANCY WINNING THOUSANDS OF POUNDS? TURN TO PAGE 38 ...

A decade

IT seems hard to believe that it will be ten years next Thursday since Saints officially threw open the doors at St Mary's for the first time and welcomed Espanyol for a momentous friendly.

Adam Leitch
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CHIEF SPORTS REPORTER

The move from The Dell to St Mary's was the start of a new era at the club.

So much changed as Saints tried to keep pace with the burgeoning Premier League. Crowds doubled overnight and, after an initial dry period, that even saw a witch employed to try and lift the losing curse, things picked up.

St Mary's, and Saints in general, thrived.

However, like most football clubs there have been dark days too – Saints' c
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A DECADE OF MEMORIES: A selection of photographs showing the construction of St Mary's and some of the main events that have taken place at the stadium, including

at St Mary's

coming as they slipped down ues and into massive trou- he field.

od days seem to have d, though, with Saints win- omotion again last season. g the best games from a at St Mary's – and the worst nenviable task.

How do you rate them? Purely on the football or the occasion as a whole?

It has to be a bit of both and it is interesting that some of the most memorable matches and days over that period have actually taken place away from St Mary's.

For example, last season's promotion campaign was superb but for memorable games you really want to pick Brighton and Plymouth as the incredible, defining, significant days but both were away.

As such, despite it being a great season, you struggle to pick a game to include.

Likewise, the FA Cup semi-final and final and the Johnstone's Paint Trophy final.

And how about the bad days? Some of them can actually be superb games that Saints lost out in or the days when the atmosphere at St Mary's was at its darkest.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

emotional days against Manchester United, Sheffield United, Ajax and Walsall ... plus ex chairman Leon Crouch asking for fans' help after the club went into administration.

Saints Spotlight

2001/02

PREMIERSHIP

Aug 25: Chelsea ..... L 0-2
Sep 24: Aston Villa ..... L 1-3 (Pahars)
Oct 13: Arsenal ..... L 0-2
Oct 24: Ipswich ..... D 3-3 (Beattie, Pahars, Marsden)
Nov 3: Blackburn ..... L 1-2 (Pahars)
Nov 24: Charlton ..... W 1-0 (Pahars)
Dec 15: Sunderland ..... W 2-0 (OG, Pahars)
Dec 26: Tottenham ..... W 1-0 (Beattie)
Dec 29: Leeds ..... L 0-1
Jan 9: Liverpool ..... W 2-0 (Beattie, OG)
Jan 13: Man Utd ..... L 1-3 (Beattie)
Jan 30: West Ham ..... W 2-0 (K Davies, Fernandes)
Feb 23: Bolton ..... D 0-0
Mar 6: Middlesbrough ..... D 1-1 (A Svensson)
Mar 16: Leicester ..... D 2-2 (Pahars 2)
Mar 30: Fulham ..... D 1-1 (Delap)
Apr 6: Derby ..... W 2-0 (Oakley, Pahars)
Apr 20: Everton ..... L 0-1
May 11: Newcastle ..... W 3-1 (A Svensson, Beattie, Telfer)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
19	7	5	7	22	22

2002/03

PREMIERSHIP

Aug 17: Middlesbrough ..... D 0-0
Aug 28: Cheslea ..... D 1-1 (Fernandes)
Sep 11: Everton ..... W 1-0 (Pahars)
Sep 21: Charlton ..... D 0-0
Oct 5: Man City ..... W 2-0 (Ormerod 2)
Oct 27: Fulham ..... W 4-2 (Beattie 3, Ormerod)
Nov 9: Blackburn ..... D 1-1 (Beattie)
Nov 23: Arsenal ..... W 3-2 (Beattie 2, Delgado)
Dec 7: Birmingham ..... W 2-0 (Beattie 2)
Dec 14: Newcastle ..... D 1-1 (Marsden)
Dec 28: Sunderland ..... W 2-1 (Beattie, Tessem)
Jan 1: Tottenham ..... W 1-0 (Beattie)
Jan 18: Liverpool ..... L 0-1
Feb 1: Man Utd ..... L 0-2
Mar 1: West Brom ..... W 1-0 (Beattie)
Mar 22: Aston Villa ..... D 2-2 (Beattie, K Davies)
Apr 5: West Ham ..... D 1-1 (Beattie)
Apr 19: Leeds ..... W 3-2 (Ormerod, Beattie, A Svensson)
May 3: Bolton ..... D 0-0

P	W	D	L	F	A
19	9	8	2	25	16

● JAMES Beattie is the top scoing Saint in the first decade at St Mary's.

The former England striker scored 28 goals for the club at the stadium.

But Rickie Lambert is closing in fast on Beattie, with 25 goals in his two seasons at the club.

Leading Saints scorers at St Mary's

James Beattie 28
Rickie Lambert 25
Stern John 13
Marian Pahars 12
Adam Lallana 12
Kenwyone Jones 12
Lee Barnard 12
Kevin Phillips 11
Marek Saganowski 10

From Back Page

Everybody should have a go at doing this - there is no right and no wrong answer, just whatever feeling you get inside when you recall the matches.

Daily Echo reporter Adam Leitch has covered the club since 2002 and has tried to pick his.

Top five St Mary's games

March 9, 2003 - Saints 2 Wolves 0

This game was the FA Cup sixth round tie and sent Saints to Villa Park for a semi-final that ultimately took them to the Millennium Stadium.

Though the team's performance on the day of the final against Arsenal was a damp squib, the same could not be said of this match.

That iconic picture of the great Chris Marsden wheeling away after giving Saints the lead remains one of my all-time favourite St Mary's images.

An amazing atmosphere, from an amazing day, from an amazing time at the club.

December 2, 2004 - Saints 2 Portsmouth 0

After all the talk and all the hype the old enemies finally met again.

There had been enough excitement after the two clubs found themselves in the same division again so when they got drawn in together in the cup it brought forward the first game.

It was at St Mary's and two James Beattie goals set up a memorable win, somewhat helped by an early red card for Pompey defender Arjan De Zeeuw.

May 12, 2004 - Saints 3 Newcastle 3

No matter what you thought of Paul Sturrock's brief tenure in charge at Saints you could not fault it for entertainment.

Under the electric atmosphere of the floodlights came an absolute ding-dong of a game that could have gone either way.

Shola Ameobi got the opening goal after seven minutes but James Beattie levelled it up 12 minutes later.

Lee Bowyer restored the Magpies' advantage on 35 minutes only for a Titus Bramble own goal to restore parity four minutes later.

After chances for both sides Saints thought they had won it through Leandre Griffit two minutes from time but Darren Ambrose secured a late equaliser for Newcastle. A thrilling game.

April 30, 2005 - Saints 4 Norwich 3

Saints were teetering on the brink of Premier League relegation and everybody knew they simply had to beat Norwich to give themselves a chance. St Mary's turned out in force and created an atmosphere possibly unequalled in its ten year existence.

Harry Redknapp's side fell behind to a David Bentley goal after just three minutes but they were 2-1 up by 20 minutes thanks to Matt Oakley and Peter Crouch.

Danny Higginbotham's own goal, Graeme Le Saux and Leon McKenzie's strike four minutes into first half stoppage time left the game level at 3-3 at half time.

After a brief pause for air during the break the second half was a much tenser, tighter affair with both sides aware their survival chances were on the line.

It was Saints who bagged the winner with Henri Camara smashing the ball in from 20 yards two minutes from time to send the ground delirious and give Saints a flicker of hope.

November 29, 2006 - Saints 4 Birmingham 3

In terms of a pure football match this is my favourite ever game at St Mary's.

It was just a wonderful game of football and the final score could have been 10-10 there were so many chances.

And just as Saints seemed to have it won Steve Bruce's side had the chance of an equaliser that went begging with virtually the last kick of the game.

Under the floodlights it was a special atmosphere that was fitting for such a special game.

DRAMATIC: Henri Camara blasts a late winner v Norwich, April 2005

QUIET PLEASE: James Beattie scores against Pompey, Dec 2003.

St Mary's turned out in force and created an atmosphere possibly unequalled in its ten year existence

Five worst games

May 15, 2005 - Saints 1 Manchester United 2

A relegation day is never going to be a happy one - let alone when it happens in front of your own fans.

Saints supporters turned out, probably more in hope than expectation.

And unfortunately relegation from the Premier League was confirmed.

November 19, 2005 - Saints 3 Leeds 4

In the history of dismal collapses this ranks amongst the very worst.

Saints were 3-0 up at half time through Marian Pahars and two goals from Nigel Quashie.

Saints were in fact still 3-0 up with 14 minutes to go.

The match ended in a stunning 4-3 win for Leeds.

NOMINATE YOUR BEST (AND WORST) ST MARY'S MEMORIES ...

Saints Spotlight

IRONIC: Chris Marsden scores against Wolves, March 2003.

THRILLING: Wright-Phillips celebrates his goal against Birmingham, November 2006.

GETTING SHIRTY: Henri Camara celebrates his late winner v Norwich, April 2005

THRILLER: Leandre Griffit nets in the 3-3 draw v Newcastle, May 2004.

INCREDIBLE: Fans turn against Lowe, Jan 2006.

It was a breathtaking turn-around and everybody was totally shell-shocked.

January 21, 2006 - Saints 0 Ipswich 2

Saints suffered a dismal defeat at the hands of Ipswich, who scored early and late through Alan Lee.

But the game was also memorable for being one of the hottest atmospheres ever at St Mary's.

It was the day when the protests against chairman Rupert Lowe really picked up and, truth be told, it was the beginning of the end for his first stint at the club.Before that game the protests came just from a hardcore of fans whilst the rest of the Saints faithful sat patiently supporting the team.

But in the face of an abject defeat the mood suddenly turned and, within minutes, the entire ground stood as one and sung in protest.

An incredible, shocking, spine-tingling moment that will live long in the memory of all those present.

April 25, 2009 - Saints 2 Burnley 2

What a horrible, horrible day.

Saints fans were suffering enough as their club was in administration and their team fighting relegation to the Championship.

But, just two days before Mark Wotte's team faced Burnley, all hope of Championship survival had been extinguished with the news that Saints faced a ten point deduction, which would be applied at the end of the campaign if they avoided the drop. In effect they were relegated.

Over 25,000 turned up to show support for the club, and because they had already bought tickets hoping to cheer their side to a dramatic relegation escape.

Saints twice took the lead but were twice pegged back.

It summed up a miserable time.

September 4, 2010 - Saints 0 Rochdale 2

Maybe this game was a spur for Saints to go on and produce their promotion winning season, maybe it wasn't.

But to be losing at home to Rochdale in a league match was a reminder of how far down the footballing pyramid Saints had sunk, and that the team were rather floundering following the poorly timed sacking of Alan Pardew.

You know it's bad when the chairman of the opposition goes into the tunnel to give interviews as it is one of the most momentous days in their club's history.

There is a happy end, though - Nigel Adkins came in and steered Saints to promotion.

2003/04

PREMIERSHIP

Aug 23: Birmingham .....D 0-0
Aug 31: Man Utd .....W 1-0 (Beattie)
Sep 13: Wolves .....W 2-0 (Beattie 2)
Sep 27: Middlesbrough .....L 0-1
Oct 25: Blackburn .....W 2-0 (Beattie, Griffit)
Nov 1: Man City .....L 0-2
Nov 22: Chelsea .....L 0-1
Dec 7: Charlton .....W 3-2 (M Svensson, Ormerod 2)
Dec 21: Portsmouth .....W 3-0 (OG, Pahars, Beattie)
Dec 29: Arsenal .....L 0-1
Jan 7: Leicester .....D 0-0
Jan 17: Leeds .....W 2-1 (Ormerod, Phillips)
Feb 7: Fulham .....D 0-0
Feb 21: Everton .....D 3-3 (Phillips, Beattie, Fernandes)
Mar 14: Liverpool .....W 2-0 (Beattie, Phillips)
Mar 27: Tottenham .....W 1-0 (Delap)
Apr 24: Bolton .....L 1-2 (Pahars)
May 8: Aston Villa .....D 1-1 (Phillips)
May 12: Newcastle .....D 3-3 (Beattie, OG, Griffit)

P	W	D	L	F	A
19	8	6	5	24	17

2004/05

PREMIERSHIP

Aug 21: Blackburn .....W 3-2 (Phillips, A Svensson, Beattie)
Aug 25: Bolton .....L 1-2 (Crouch)
Sep 19: Newcastle .....L 1-2 (A Svensson)
Oct 2: Man City .....D 0-0
Oct 24: Birmingham .....D 0-0
Nov 6: West Brom .....D 2-2 (A Svensson 2)
Nov 13: Portsmouth .....W 2-1 (Blackstock, Phillips)
Nov 27: Crystal Palace .....D 2-2 (Phillips, Jakobsson)
Dec 11: Middlesbrough .....D 2-2 (Phillips, Crouch)
Dec 26: Charlton .....D 0-0
Jan 5: Fulham .....D 3-3 (Phillips 2, Rosenior OG)
Jan 22: Liverpool .....W 2-0 (Prutton, Crouch)
Feb 6: Everton .....D 2-2 (Crouch, Camera)
Feb 26: Arsenal .....D 1-1 (Crouch)
Mar 5: Tottenham .....W 1-0 (Quashie)
Apr 2: Chelsea .....L 1-3 (Phillips)
Apr 16: Aston Villa .....L 2-3 (Phillips, Crouch)
Apr 30: Norwich .....W 4-3 (Oakley, Crouch, Le Saux, Camara)
May 15: Man Utd .....L 1-2 (Quashie)

P	W	D	L	F	A
19	5	9	5	30	30

● Saints' best winning leaugue run in a season at St Mary's came at the end of last term.

Nigel Adkins' men won their last nine home games of 2010/11 to help clinch automatic promotion.

The club's worst losing run at home in the league at St Mary's came in 2007/08 when they lost three in a row.

Three times they have drawn four in a row at home – in 2001/02, 2004/05 and 2005/06.

The longest unbeaten run is 12 games – in 2002/03, 2004/05 and 2010/11.

Saints would have set a new St Mary's record of 13 unbeaten league games if they avoided defeat against Leeds this weekend.

... GO ONLINE TO dailyecho.co.uk AND LEAVE YOUR SELECTIONS

Saints Spotlight

2005/06

CHAMPIONSHIP

Aug 6: Wolves ..... D 0-0
Aug 20: Norwich ..... W 1-0 (Quashie)
Aug 27: Crewe ..... W 2-0 (Belmadi, Quashie)
Sep 10: QPR ..... D 1-1 (Higginbotham) .....
Sep 24: Plymouth ..... D 0-0
Sep 28: Reading ..... D 0-0
Oct 15: Hull ..... D 1-1 (Oakley)
Oct 29: Stoke ..... W 2-0 (Walcott, Belmadi)
Nov 19: Leeds ..... L 3-4 (Pahars, Quashie 2)
Dec 3: Burnley ..... D 1-1 (Higginbotham)
Dec 11: Luton ..... W 1-0 (Walcott)
Dec 28: Sheff Utd ..... L 0-1
Jan 2: Brighton ..... W 2-1 (Blackstock 2)
Jan 21: Ipswich ..... L 0-2
Jan 25: Crystal Palace ..... D 0-0
Feb 4: Derby ..... D 0-0
Feb 15: Preston ..... D 0-0
Feb 25: Sheff Wed ..... W 3-0 (Higginbotham, Rasiak, K Jones)
Mar 4: Coventry ..... D 1-1 (Rasiak)
Mar 20: Watford ..... L 1-3 (Madsen)
Apr 1: Cardiff ..... W 3-2 (Lundekvam, Fuller 2)
Apr 17: Millwall ..... W 2-0 (Jones, Fuller)
Apr 30: Leicester ..... W 2-0 (Fuller, Surman)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
23	9	10	4	26	17

2006/07

CHAMPIONSHIP

Aug 9: Coventry ..... W 2-0 (Bale, Rasiak)
Aug 12: West Brom ..... D 0-0
Aug 26: Preston ..... D 1-1 (Rasiak)
Sep 16: Plymouth ..... W 1-0 (Rasiak)
Sep 30: QPR ..... L 1-2 (Wright)
Oct 21: Stoke ..... W 1-0 (Licka)
Nov 1: Wolves ..... W 2-0 (Wright-Philips, Jones)
Nov 4: Hull ..... D 0-0
Nov 25: Luton ..... W 2-1 (Baird, Rasiak)
Nov 29: Birmingham ..... W 4-3 (Jones 2, Skacel, Wright Phillips)
Dec 16: Norwich ..... W 2-1 (Bale, Jones)
Dec 26: Crystal Palace ..... D 1-1 (Baird)
Dec 30: Leicester ..... W 2-0 (Pele, Prutton)
Jan 13: Burnley ..... D 0-0
Jan 31: Sheff Wed ..... W 2-1 (Jones 2)
Feb 3: Derby ..... L 0-1
Feb 17: Barnsley ..... W 5-2 (Surman 3, Jones 2)
Feb 24: Ipswich ..... W 1-0 (Saganowski)
Mar 13: Cardiff ..... D 2-2 (Baird, Wright-Phillips)
Mar 16: Colchester ..... L 1-2 (Saganowski)
Apr 9: Sunderland ..... L 1-2 (Saganowski)
Apr 21: Leeds ..... W 1-0 (Wright-Phillips)
May 6: Southend ..... W 4-1 (Jones 2, Best 2)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
23	13	6	4	36	20

DAN KERINS' ST MARY'S HIGHS AND LOWS

Memories are made of this ...

MEMORIES: Peter Crouch, above, celebrates his FA Cup winner v Pompey. Left – James Beattie and Marian Pahars all smiles after the latter's goal v Pompey, Dec 2003. Above left – Leeds celebrate their four-goal comeback in November 2005.

Top 5 games

Saints 4 Tottenham Hotspur 0 (FA Cup 3rd rd) – January 2003

Possibly the greatest Saints performance I have ever seen and set us on that magnificent run to Cardiff.

Saints 1 Steaua Bucharest 1 – September 2003

The match itself wasn't a fantastic one. Saints looked a little overawed by the occasion, but what an occasion. Seeing Saints playing in Europe – no matter how briefly – was quite something and leant a special atmosphere that won't be forgotten by those there that night.

Saints 3 Portsmouth 0 – December 2003

The second time in less than a month that we easily dispatched Pompey.

This couldn't have been much more one-sided – and Pahars scored a peach which, to this day, is one of my favourite ever goals.

Add in the fact it meant we spent Christmas in a Champions' League spot and this really was the pinnacle of our time at St. Mary's.

Saints 2 Portsmouth 1 (FA Cup 4th rd) – January 2005

Pompey came to town confident of getting one over us and Redknapp, just weeks after his appointment at St Mary's.

Probably the closest game we've played against them lot in many a year, but when Matt Taylor stupidly blocked a David Prutton cross with his arm in the last minute, Peter Crouch stepped up and slotted home, avoiding a replay at Fratton Park and sending them back with their tail between their legs.

Saints 4 Norwich 3 – April 2005

This match was the very definition of end-to-end.

With so much riding on it you'd expect both sides to play it cautious, but a pulsating first half left it balanced at 3-3 until with just two minutes left up popped Henri Camara slamming home and unleashing the biggest roar ever heard at the stadium. If only the season had ended as well..

Worst 5 games

Saints 3 Ipswich 3 – October 2001

Strachan's first game in charge saw Saints with a new sense of purpose and desire.

Racing into a 3-1 win, things looked a lot brighter than they did a few days previous.

Then it became apparent how unfit and unconfident the side were as they collapsed, throwing away their lead. Such promise – and a first ever win at St Mary's – thrown away.

Credit to Strachan, though, he certainly whipped that Saints side into shape.

Oh, this was also the night when Agustin Delgado was presented to the fans…

Saints 2 Everton 2 – February 2005

Although we didn't lose, this was almost worse than the Villa match which followed a few weeks later.

In the 90th minute, St. Mary's was jumping as a vital win looked certain and a superb bit of skill from Crouch on the wing left him one-on-one with Nigel Martyn.

But the keeper safely gathered up a tired, weak shot. One quick punt later, Marcus Bent is free at an acute angle and smashes it into Paul Smith's top right corner. Agony.

Saints 2 Aston Villa 3 – April 2005

This was the match when I knew we were down. Looking assured and confident we threw it away and, for the first time, it dawned on me that Saints didn't have the Great Escape spirit of the 90s anymore.

Saints 3 Leeds 4 – November 2005

Horrendous. Those final 19 minutes will haunt me until the day I die. Unsurprisingly it was after this that many Saints fans decided they wanted rid of 'Arry. If they ever make Back To the Future 4, I want them to go back in time and change this game.

Saints 2 Charlton 3 – April 2009

Saints in administration, but with a great chance to haul themselves out of the bottom three against rock bottom Charlton.

But the young side just aren't up to it. Charlton were awful but Saints even more so.

Like the Villa game four years earlier, this was the match that practically rubber-stamped relegation.

MORE ST MARY'S MEMORIES – SEE PAGES 30 & 31

Saints Spotlight

NICK ILLINGSWORTH'S ST MARY'S HIGHS AND LOWS

Highs and lows

AGONY: Saints go down against Manchester United. **ECSTACY:** Saints stay up, right, against Sheffield United.

MISERY: Burnley score at St Mary's, April 2009.

Top 5 games

Saints 1 Charlton 0 – November 2001

Three months, two managers, five attempts and no wins when Charlton arrived.

Marian Pahars scored the only goal and the home hoodoo was broken in front of the biggest crowd so far.

The first time that the sheer noise that the stadium could produce was in evidence. It now felt like home.

Saints 2 Wolves 0 (FA Cup 6th rd) – March 2003

A 2-0 win as Saints reached their first FA Cup semi for 17 years.

Marsden and an OG were the scorers as the stadium rocked and the realisation dawned Saints were only 90 minutes from the final.

Saints 3 Portsmouth 0 – December 2003

This was Pompey's second visit of the month to St Mary's and their 2-0 defeat in the Carling Cup was bettered. A bizarre goal from a Jason Dodd corner opened proceedings and Pahars and Beattie finished them off.

The sight of Beattie running in front of the Blue Few in triumph, his hand held to his ear, was a joy to behold.

Saints were in the top four for Christmas. It didn't get better than this and, sadly since, it hasn't.

Saints 3 Sheffield United 2 – May 2008

Only a few short years earlier no one could have predicted that we would be fighting to stay out of League One.

This game had it all, goals, tension and a sending off.

Luckily three of the goals went to Saints – Saganowski and Stern John (2).

Sometimes in football it doesn't matter what division the game is in.

It all matters just as much as the fans, who streamed onto the pitch, showed.

Saints 1 Ajax 4 – July 2009

Strange for a friendly to be one of the best matches, but it was what the game meant, not the status of it.

A few weeks earlier we were unsure if the club would still be in existence.

Now we cheered Markus Liebherr as he stood in the stand with what would become his trademark scarf around his neck.

It hit home that we had been to the brink, but that we had fought hard and pulled through.

It should stand as a reminder that as supporters we should never take anything for granted, or be complacent ever again.

Worst 5 games

Saints 0 Arsenal 2 – October 2001

The type of defeat where we were lucky to get nil, another sending off (Marsden), and the realisation we were watching a team that was heading for relegation unless something changed very quickly. As history shows, it did eight days later.

Saints 2 Everton 2 – February 2005

Things were looking up, we were 2-1 up in the final minute of injury time and Peter Crouch was right through on goal.

If he had done anything other than what happened next we would have won and stayed up.

We all know what happened next and, six years later, I still sometimes wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat, screaming 'take it into the ******* corner'.

Saints 1 Man Utd 2 – May 2005

Saints departed the Premier League with barely a whimper. The Spirit Of Southampton that had burned so brightly for so long was crushed under Redknapp's boot.

Saints 2 Burnley 2 – April 2009

The worst season in my Saints supporting history as the club tore itself apart in every way shape or form.

Saints could still mathematically survive if they beat Burnley.

But they drew 2-2 and we stared the abyss in the face.

Not only back in the third tier of English football for the first time in nearly half a century, but in administration and unsure if we would even survive.

Saints 1 Portsmouth 4 – February 2010

The first time we had faced Pompey in a game where we were in an inferior division to them in most fans lifetime.

It's hard to comment about the side Pompey put out without being sued for libel.

To compound matters, we were weak through players being cup tied and injured.

For a big part of the game it looked like we might spring an upset. However, fitness told in the end.

Whatever the circumstances, a 4-1 drubbing by your biggest enemy is not something to celebrate.

2007/08

CHAMPIONSHIP

Aug 11: Crystal Palace ..... L 1-4 (Saganowski)
Aug 23: Stoke ..... W 3-2 (Surman, Rasiak, Viafara)
Sep 19: Colchester ..... D 1-1 (Wright-Phillips)
Sep 22: Barnsley ..... L 2-3 (Saganowski, Idiakez)
Oct 6: West Brom ..... W 3-2 (John 2, Skacel)
Oct 21: Cardiff ..... W 1-0 (John)
Nov 3: Charlton ..... L 0-1
Nov 6: Wolves ..... D 0-0
Nov 24: Blackpool ..... W 1-0 (John)
Dec 4: Sheff Wed ..... D 0-0
Dec 8: Hull ..... W 4-0 (Wright-Phillips, John 3)
Dec 22: Preston ..... L 0-1
Jan 1: Watford ..... L 0-3
Jan 12: Scunthorpe ..... W 1-0 (Rasiak)
Jan 29: Norwich ..... L 0-1
Feb 9: QPR ..... L 2-3 (Powell, John)
Feb 19: Plymouth ..... L 0-2
Mar 1: Ipswich ..... D 1-1 (John)
Mar 11: Leicester ..... W 1-0 (John)
Mar 22: Coventry ..... D 0-0
Apr 5: Bristol C ..... W 2-0 (John, Euell)
Apr 19: Burnley ..... L 0-1
May 4: Sheff Utd ..... W 3-2 (Saganowski, John 2)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
23	9	5	9	26	27

2008/09

CHAMPIONSHIP

Aug 16: Birmingham ..... L 1-2 (Perry)
Aug 30: Blackpool ..... L 0-1
Sep 17: Ipswich ..... D 2-2 (Surman, Peckhart)
Sep 20: Barnsley ..... D 0-0
Sep 30: Norwich ..... W 2-0 (Robertson, McGoldrick)
Oct 18: Watford ..... L 0-3
Oct 28: Coventry ..... D 1-1 (McGoldrick)
Nov 8: Bristol C ..... L 0-1
Nov 15: Wolves ..... L 1-2 (Pearce)
Nov 25: Plymouth ..... D 0-0
Dec 6: Sheff Wed ..... D 1-1 (Wright-Phillips)
Dec 20: Nottm Forest ..... L 0-2
Dec 28: Reading ..... D 1-1 (McGoldrick)
Jan 17: Doncaster ..... L 1-2 (Saganowski)
Jan 31: Swansea ..... D 2-2 (Saganowski 2)
Feb 3: Sheff Utd ..... L 1-2 (Surman)
Feb 21: Preston ..... W 3-1 (Surman, Saganowski 2)
Feb 28: Cardiff ..... W 1-0 (McGoldrick)
Mar 10: Derby ..... D 1-1 (Perry)
Mar 14: QPR ..... D 0-0
Apr 4: Charlton ..... L 2-3 (McGoldrick, Wright-Phillips)
Apr 13: Crystal Palace ..... W 1-0 (McGoldrick)
Apr 25: Burnley ..... D 2-2 (Wright-Phillips, McGoldrick)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
23	4	10	9	23	29

● Saints have played 214 league games at St Mary's, winning 95 of them - of which almost a third (31) have come in the last two seasons. There have been 68 draws and 51 defeats.

DAILY ECHO AND SPORTS PINK - BEST FOR SAINTS COVERAGE

Saints Spotlight

2009/10

LEAGUE ONE

Aug 8: Millwall ..... D 1-1 (Paterson)
Aug 22: Brentford ..... D 1-1 (Harding)
Sep 5: Colchester ..... D 0-0
Sep 19: Yeovil ..... W 2-0 (Lambert 2)
Sep 29: Bristol R ..... L 2-3 (Lallana, Lambert)
Oct 3: Gillingham ..... W 4-1 (Lambert, Waigo, Lallana 2)
Oct 24: MK Dons ..... W 3-1 (Hammond, Lambert, Connolly)
Nov 15: Brighton ..... L 1-3 (Lambert)
Nov 21: Norwich ..... D 2-2 (Lallana, Connolly)
Dec 1: Wycombe ..... W 1-0 (Lambert)
Dec 12: Tranmere ..... W 3-0 (Harding, Lambert 2)
Dec 26: Exeter ..... W 3-1 (James, Trotman, Waigo
Jan 30: Stockport ..... W 2-0 (Lambert, Waigo)
Feb 27: Walsall ..... W 5-1 (Puncheon, Barnard 2, Lambert, Lallana)
Mar 2: Huddersfield ..... W 5-0 (Lambert, Puncheon, Barnard, Hammond, Waigo)
Mar 13: Leeds ..... W 1-0 (Harding)
Mar 16: Swindon ..... L 0-1
Mar 23: Hartlepool ..... W 3-2 (Barnard, Lambert, Waigo)
Apr 5: Leyton Orient ..... W 2-1 (Lallana 2)
Apr 10: Charlton ..... W 1-0 (Antonio)
Apr 20: Oldham ..... D 0-0
Apr 24: Carlisle ..... W 3-2 (Antonio 2, Lambert)
May 8: Southend ..... W 3-1 (Lambert 2, Lallana)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
23	15	5	3	48	21

2010/11

LEAGUE ONE

Aug 7: Plymouth ..... L 0-1
Aug 21: Leyton Orient ..... D 1-1 (Lambert)
Sep 4: Rochdale ..... L 0-2
Sep 18: Colchester ..... D 0-0
Oct 2: Bournemouth ..... W 2-0 (Lambert 2)
Oct 9: Tranmere ..... W 2-0 (Lambert, Lallana)
Oct 23: Oldham ..... W 2-1 (Fonte, Chamerlain)
Nov 2: Dag & Red ..... W 4-0 (Chamberlain 2, Barnard, Fonte)
Nov 2: Peterborough ..... W 4-1 (Barnard, Fonte, Chaplow, Do Prado)
Nov 23: Brighton ..... D 0-0
Dec 11: Brentford ..... L 0-2
Dec 28: Huddersfield ..... W 4-1 (Lambert, Chamberlain, Jaidi, Chaplow)
Jan 1: Exeter ..... W 4-0 (Do Prado 2, Lallana, Barnard)
Jan 15: Notts County ..... D 0-0
Feb 12: Carlisle ..... W 1-0 (Lambert)
Feb 26: Swindon ..... W 4-1 (Lallana, Lambert, Jaidi, Barnard)
Mar 8: Yeovil ..... W 3-0 (Barnard 2, Chamberlain)
Mar 19: Sheff Wed ..... W 2-0 (Fonte, Lambert)
Apr 2: MK Dons ..... W 3-2 (Fonte 2, Barnard)
Apr 5: Charlton ..... W 2-0 (Do Prado, Barnard)
Apr 16: Bristol R ..... W 1-0 (Do Prado)
Apr 25: Hartlepool ..... W 2-0 (Lambert, Fonte)
May 7: Walsall ..... W 3-1 (Do Prado, Connolly, Chamberlain)

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
23	16	4	3	44	13

THE PLAYERS SENT OFF IN ST MARY'S FIRST 10 YEARS ...

SEEING RED: Matt Paterson is dismissed against Manchester United in the FA Cup.

2001/02
Rory Delap v Aston Villa, Sept 01
Dion Dublin (Villa), Sept 01
Chris Marsden v Arsenal, Oct 01
Rory Delap v Bolton, Feb 02
Gianluca Festa (Mboro), Mar 02
Tahir El Khalej v Newcastle, May 02

2002/03
Marian Pahars v Man City, Oct 02
Tugay (Blackburn), Nov 02
Sol Campbell (Arsenal), Nov 02
Malky Mackay (Norwich, FAC), Feb 03
Alan Smith (Leeds), Apr 03.

2003/04
Kevin Phillips v Mboro, Sept 03
Andy Cole (Blackburn), Oct 03
Arjan De Zeeuw (Pompey), Dec 03

2004/05
Diomansy Kamara (Pompey, FAC), Jan 05
David Prutton v Arsenal, Feb 05
Robin van Persie (Arsenal), Feb 05

2005/06
Claus Lundekvam v Wolves, Aug 05
Marlon Broomes (Stoke), Oct 05
Rory Delap v Luton, Dec 05

2006/07
Kenwyne Jones v Palace, Dec 06
Daniel Nardiello (Barnsley), Feb 07
Alan Thompson (Leeds), Apr 07

2007/08
Dominic Werling (Barnsley), Sept 07
Jose Semedo (Charlton), Nov 07
Youssef Safri v QPR, Feb 08
Stern John v Sheff Utd, May 08

2008/09
Dejan Stefanovic (Norwich), Sept 08
Jason Euell v Wolves, Nov 08
Matt Paterson v Man Utd (FAC), Jan 08
Darius Henderson (Sheff Utd), Feb 09

2009/10
Kez Izzet (Colchester), Sept 09
Troy Archibald-Henville (Exeter), Dec 09
Simon Ferry (Swindon), Mar 10.

2010/11
Lee Barnard (v Swindon), Aug 10
Adam Smith (Bournemouth), Oct 10
Gary Borrowdale (Carlisle), Feb 11
Sam Collins (Hartlepool), Apr 11

Fans' St Mary's memories

MY favourite memory of St Mary's was the 3-2 victory over Arsenal in November 2002.

It has stuck in the mind for many reasons.

It was probably Agustin Delgado's most valuable contribution in a red and white shirt.

He was instrumental in the win and caused Sol Campbell so many problems.

Firstly he backed into Campbell, fell over and won a free-kick that Beattie dispatched.

Secondly he was put clear, but due to his lack of pace Campbell caught up with him and fouled him, resulting in a red card for the England centre half and a penalty that Beattie stroked home.

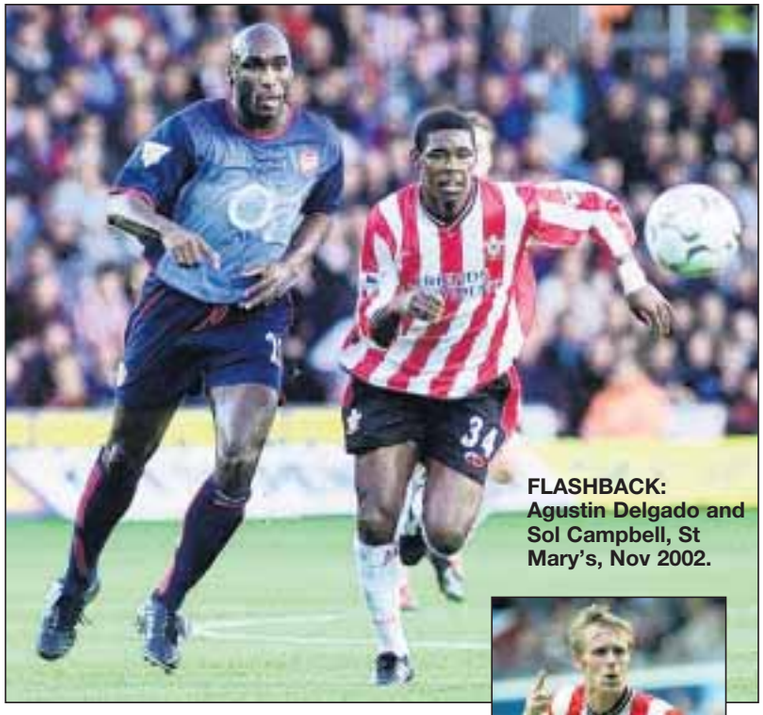
Lastly he scored what proved to be the winning goal, falling to 'head' or more so shoulder the ball in.

The slow motion replay on Match of the Day was priceless as you saw the surprise on his face as he realised he actually scored!

The best moment of the match, though, in my eyes had to be a quite unbelievable triple save by Neimi.

It is without doubt the best goalkeeping I've ever witnessed and still amazes me to this day jsut how he kept the ball out.

Peter Briers



FLASHBACK: Agustin Delgado and Sol Campbell, St Mary's, Nov 2002.

THERE have only ever been five hat-tricks scored in ten seasons at St Mary's – and the first two came in the same month!

1 Oct 2, 2002 – Brett Omerod, pictured right, v Tranmere (League Cup)
2 Oct 27, 2002 – James Beattie v Fulham (Pemiership)
3 Oct 27 2004 – Dexter Blackstock vColchester (League Cup)
4 Feb 17 2007 – Andrew Surman v Barnsley (Championship)
5 Dec 8 2007 – Stern John v Hull (Championship).

1) Beating Pompey 3-0, going 4th and into the Champions League places at Christmas, December 2003.

2) Beattie's late winner v Manchester United, August 2003.

3) Norwich 4-3, April 2005. Shame it was all in vain.

4) Staying up v Sheff Utd, May 2008. The game had so many twists it was unreal.

5) Burnley in the relegation season to League 1. It was Rupert's last game with the football club.

Richard Luffman, Eastleigh

Best moment

Near the end of the Walsall game when the stadium announcer (with unfortunately a jobsworth voice) told the supporters if they invaded the pitch the team wouldn't come out and do a lap of honour.

The Northam End and parts of the Kingsland Stand immediately invaded the pitch.

If there was ever a time to say nothing, that was it.

He was right, the team didn't do a lap of honour, but did anybody really care?

We were up.

That's what mattered.

The spirit of Southampton was in the stadium. Some pride was restored and the 'Blues' had left the building.

Worst moment

When the final whistle went and Saints were relegated from the Premiership after losing to Man U. Roy Keane ran to where I was sat in the Kingsland Stand and swore at the Saints supporters.

I will never forget that outburst. I live for the day when we return. His words will motivate me forever.

Steve Partridge, Basingstoke.

Favourite memory is probably being in The Northam End as we beat Southend 4-1 in the last league game of the 2006/07 season to secure sixth in the Championship on the last day and a place in the play-offs.

I'm sure there were many more people than seats, as the gangways were full too and when we scored it was like being back on the terraces as everyone surged forward.

Great atmosphere, 32,000 crowd and a great memory!

Worst memory must be seeing us go down to League 1 on the last day of the 2008/09 season.

Ten points deducted, club in dire straits, virtually extinct and relegated.

Horrible time.

Rob the saint in NZ

Favourite moments; Theo Walcott's first goal, watching Fabrice Fernandes bamboozle opponents and watching the youngsters on Wednesday evenings.

Worst moments; all of those games where the home crowd turned on itself.

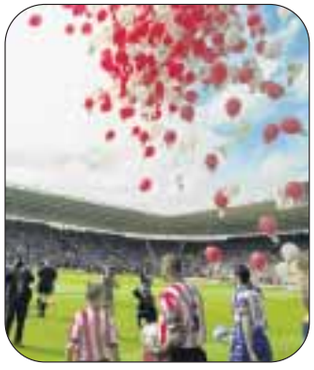
I don't ever want to see those days again.

The Exiled Saint, Newport, Shropshire.

GOT A VIEW ON SAINTS? THEN EMAIL echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

Saints Spotlight

The first St Mary's game



LINING UP: The Saints team which started the first game at St Mary's, the 4-3 pre-season friendly loss to Espanyol on August 11 2001.

FLASHBACK: Scenes from St Mary's on August 11 2001 when the stadium hosted its first game against Spanish club Espanyol.

FOUR PAGES OF CRICKET START ON PAGE 42

SAINTS IN THE CUPS AT STMARY'S

FA CUP

2003
Aug 7: Tottenham ..... W 4-0
(M Svensson, Tessem, A Svensson, Beattie)
Jan 25: Millwall ..... D 1-1
(Davies)
Feb 15: Norwich ..... W 2-0
(Tessem, A Svensson)
March 9: Wolves ..... W 2-0
(Marsden, OG)

2004
Jan 2: Newcastle ..... L 0-3

2005
Jan 29: Pompey ..... W 2-1
(Oakley, Crouch)
Feb 19: Brentford ..... D 2-2
(Camara 2)
Mar 12: Man Utd ..... L 0-4

2006
Jan 7: MK Dons ..... W 4-3
(Quashie, Prutton, Walcott, Kenton)

2008
Jan 5: Leicester ..... W 2-0
(Surman, Vignal)
Jan 26: Bury ..... W 2-0
(Surman, Rasiak)

2009
Jan 4: Man Utd ..... L 0-3

2010
Jan 2: Luton ..... W 1-0
(Lambert)
Jan 23: Ipswich ..... W 2-1
(Thomas, Antonio)
Feb 13: Pompey ..... L 1-4
(Lambert)

Nov 6: Shrewsbury ..... W 2-0
(Connolly, Lallana)
Nov 27: Cheltenham ..... W 3-0
(Lallana, Guly, Gobern)

2011
Jan 8: Blackpool ..... W 2-0
(Barnard, Guly)
Jan 29: Man Utd ..... L 1-2
(Chaplow)

UEFA CUP

2003
Sept 24: Steuau Bucharestd D1-1
(Phillips)

JOHNSTONE'S PAINT TROPHY

2009
Oct 6: Torquay ..... D 2-2
(Waigo 2)
Won on pens
Nov 11: Charlton ..... W 2-1
(Thomas, Lambert)
Dec 15: Norwich ..... D 2-2
(Waigo, Harding)
Won on pens

2010
Feb 9: MK Dons ..... W 3-1
(Lambert, OG, Lallana)

Aug 31: Swindon ..... L 0-3

LEAGUE CUP

2002
Oct 2: Tranmere ..... W 6-1
(Ormerod 3, Marsden, Fernandes, M Svensson)

2003
Dec 2: Pompey ..... W 2-0
(Beattie 2)

2004
Oct 27: Colchester ..... W 3-2
(Blackstock 3)

2006
Aug 23: Yeovil ..... W 5-2
(OG, Skacel, Wright-Phillips, Dyer, Jones)

2008
Aug 26: Birmingham ..... W 2-0
(Holmes, Lallana)

2009
Aug 11: Northampton ..... W 2-0
(Lambert, Lallana)
Aug 25: Birmingham ..... L 1-2
(Lallana)

2010
Aug 10: Bournemouth ..... W 2-0
(Lallana, Chamberlain)
Aug 24: Bolton ..... L 0-1

Total

P	W	D	L	F	A
34	21	5	8	66	42

Non-league Football

Non-league News

Jack's staying power

JACK Smith is staying in the Evo-Stik Southern One South & West following his release from Gosport Borough.

The former Eastleigh and Fleet Town defender, below, has joined Borough's divisional rivals Abingdon United.

Abingdon also include former Andover midfielder Curtis Angell among their summer captures and have re-signed ex-Basingstoke Town defender Ricky Allaway and former AFC Newbury frontman Yashwa Romeo.

Tom Melledew, meanwhile, has left Abingdon and returned to his old club Thatcham Town.

He was part of the Thatcham Town squad that won the Linden Homes Trophy at AFC Totton/Totton & Eling.

Downbeat Vickers

DORCHESTER Town boss Ashley Vickers struggled to find any positives out of last Saturday's 2-1 defeat against Southern Premier neighbours Weymouth.

The Blue Square Bet South outfit led by a Nick Crittenden goal at half-time, but lost their way in the second period as Rob Wolleaston and Jamie Beasley turned the tables for the Terras in the Bob Lucas Memorial Trophy game.

To make matters worse, skipper Mark Jermyn and new signing Ben Dickenson from Christchurch limped off injured, while striker Rico Wilson saw red late on for lashing out.

"There were no positives for us," said Vickers, pictured above. "All credit to Weymouth though. They won and I'm not going to undervalue that. They are a lot more solid and credit to (new management team) Brendon King and Matt Groves for that."

Macey strengthens

JIM Macey, boss of Sydenhams Division One club Whitchurch United, has further strengthened his squad with the signings of Johnny Rimmer and Nick Jupp. Meanwhile Mark Buttress has been appointed goalkeeping coach at Longmeadow.

Pompey's loss is Hawks' gain

WESTLEIGH Park witnessed its finest display of football yet last Saturday night as Spanish La Liga side Real Betis made an unscheduled stop at Havant & Waterlooville.

The Hawks stood in for Portsmouth at late notice after the npower Championship side had been stranded in America when a catering truck drove into the aircraft due to fly them home from their pre-season tour.

Real Betis cruised to a comfortable 7-0 victory in front of a 783 crowd, but Hawks' heavy defeat was a small price to pay for the memorable experience of facing Spain's Division Two champions.

"It was a great experience for this football club to pit our wits against a team of that quality," smiled Havant boss Shaun Gale, pictured right.

"I think Arsenal would be the only English club to pass the ball like they did, so it was great to play them."

A surprise face in the Havant side was frontman Mustafa Tyriaki who left at the end of last season hoping for a break into professional football.

Tyriaki has had trials with Scunthorpe and Tranmere, but Gale confirmed: "Mustafa hasn't got a club and it's a case of watch this space..."

Havant finally found their shooting boots on Monday night, recording their first pre-season win, 2-0, at the expense of Gosport Borough.

Former Eastleigh defender Chris Holland opened the scoring in the first half and Steve Ramsey bagged a late second against a Borough side containing ex-Hawks James Taylor, Aaron Cook and Brett Poate.

Gale, meanwhile, has added two more names to his Blue Square Bet South squad.

Ex-Pompey defensive midfielder Perry Ryan is on board for 2011/12 along with former Winchester City, Farnborough and Fleet Town goalkeeper Lyall Beazley.

EASY LISTENING

Wendy Gee
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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

EASTLEIGH manager Ian Baird will have found Martin Hunter's words sweet music to his ears.

Surveying the wreckage of his Saints XI's 4-1 defeat at the Silverlake Stadium on Wednesday night Hunter, the St Mary's under-21 boss, paid tribute to the work ethic of the victorious Spitfires.

Although the match had originally been billed as an under-21 fixture for Saints, there was a fair sprinkling of senior players on show with Lee Holmes, Ryan Dixon, Jonathan Forte, Joseph Mills and goalkeeper Tommy Forecast all included in the Championship club's starting XI.

But that injection of experience served no purpose for the slapdash Saints who never recovered after being rocked by an explosion of three Eastleigh goals in four minutes midway through the first half.

"The expectations of Southampton Football Club were not seen or met and we got exactly what we deserved," Hunter lamented afterwards. "We've been outfought, out-battled and outplayed.

"We couldn't adapt to Eastleigh's intensity and their willingness to work hard and that is not acceptable from any of the players that played. No matter what their experience or inexperience, you have to earn the right to play the game and we didn't in either half.

"I said to (Eastleigh boss) Ian Baird after the game that they deserved to win – and they did. The performance from ourselves was poor however you look at it."

Hunter praise such a fillip for new-look Eastleigh

IMPACT: Eastleigh's Andrew White hurdles Saints keeper Tommy Forecast before wheeling away to celebrate his goal on Wednesday evening.

When Eastleigh embarked on a major change of direction at the end of last season, their decision to ditch the bulk of their senior players and recreate a squad with an equal blend of youth and experience was met with scepticism in some quarters.

IAN BAIRD

But Wednesday's stunning performance – topped by goals from Jamie Slabber (two penalties), Andrew White and Danny Smith – may well have won some of the doubters round.

Director of football Dave Malone admits the Spitfires could be treading on thin ice if too many senior players get injured, but he has been encouraged by how quickly the young newcomers are settling in.

He said: "Without in any way getting ahead of ourselves, it was pleasing to see how our new-look team appears to be gradually moulding itself. The mixture of experience and youth on the night showed some very positive signs.

"It's evident that we haven't got the strength and experience we've had in previous years and our expectations will be in line with that.

"We've got young lads like Sam Wilson, Ben Wilson and Liam Hibberd who are 16, 17 and 18 years of age and, in normal circumstances, they wouldn't be anywhere near the first team.

"But they have come through the Eastleigh ranks and are going to be part of our first-team squad and it will make or break them.

"(Left-back) Ben Wilson, in particular, has made a big impression and Sam Wilson, who's only 16, is a real handful up front.

"(Central midfielder) Liam Hibberd's got possibilities too as has young centre-half Jack Vallis (from Shrewton United).

"And Andrew White (former Reading trainee and first year pro at Gillingham) looks as though he could be a player.

"But we're aware that we can't afford too many injuries to senior players because we'll struggle if we do. We would get hammered with a team of under-20s playing in the Conference South."

Eastleigh this week confirmed the signings of ex-Bristol Rovers goalkeeper Mike Green on a non-contract basis and ex-Salisbury and Forest Green Rovers left winger Ryan O'Hara on an initial three-month contract.

Baird has also brought in 18-year-old midfielder/left-back Frankie Raymond on a month's loan from Championship outfit Reading.

Raymond has had previous Blue Square Bet South experience with Basingstoke Town, who visit the Silverlake Stadium for the first match of the season next Saturday (August 13).

MORE NON-LEAGUE ON PAGES 34-37

Non-league Football

BIG SPENDERS DON'T SCARE BOSS KEMP

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CHRISTCHURCH boss Graham Kemp is not at all intimidated by the cash being splashed in pursuit of Sydenhams Wessex League glory.

The likes of Winchester City, Blackfield & Langley and Lymington Town have dug deep into their coffers for new signings this summer in the race to succeed promoted three-time champions Poole Town at the Sydenhams Premier summit.

But with very few exceptions – notably former Reading defender Pete Castle who has joined Lymington from Southern League outfit Gosport Borough – there has been no influx of talent from higher up the non-League pyramid.

"I'm not at all frightened of these clubs because they're all signing Wessex League players and paying silly money for them," said Kemp, pictured below.

"It was obvious to everyone that Poole had a Southern League side and the majority of their signings were Southern League players.

"When you went into a game against Poole you felt that if you played really well you might get a point and only if they had a real off day would you be in with a chance of beating them.

"But nearly all the money that's being paid out now is going on Wessex League players.

"So whoever we play next season will have a Wessex League team rather than a Southern League team like Poole's and I'll be drumming it into my players that we'll be on level terms with everyone."

A couple of week's back Totton & Eling boss Kev Dawtry set the cat among the pigeons when he questioned whether players were joining the so-called 'big spenders' for genuine football reasons or just to pick up a bumper pay packet.

Blackfield boss Louis Bell suggested Dawtry should worry about his own club rather than pry into other people's business, but Kemp said: "I agree with Kev. I know he took a bit of stick about keeping his nose out, but he's got a right to his opinion.

"He's been in football all his life, the same as I have, and we've got valid views.

"If I had a budget to work with and a player told me he wanted £250 a week, I wouldn't entertain it. You don't get value for money at that price.

"People have spent all this money but some of these clubs are going to finish fifth or sixth at best. They can't all win the league and there are not enough cups to go round.

"Is spending x-amount a week to finish fifth or sixth acceptable? I don't think so. I can't see the benefit in that.

"It makes you think that some of the players who have moved this summer have managed to sort themselves out some very good deals."

Having finished last season on a flourish of 17 games unbeaten and having kept his entire squad together, bar wide man/forward Ben Dickenson, Kemp is perfectly content with his Christchurch lot.

But if he did have the luxury of a sizeable budget, he would ask any potential new signings to back their ability by signing deals based on points and appearances.

"If they didn't have the guts to sign a deal like that it would show they lacked confidence in themselves as players and in you as a manager," he said.

"I remember when I managed Brockenhurst we lost the first five or six games and, as an incentive, we were offered a £15 petrol token for every game we won. In the end I couldn't get any more petrol in the car!"

Having been part of the Lymington & New Milton success story of years gone by, Kemp has experienced working with and without a budget.

And there is no doubt in his mind where the greater satisfaction lies.

"Last Wednesday we took 17 players to a game at Ringwood and then on the Thursday we took 18 on a coach to Chichester for the Steve Bernard Memorial game and didn't get back until midnight," he said.

"The lads didn't get paid a penny for that and they don't get paid during the season either, but that's the beauty of Christchurch.

"When we were sitting on the coach I turned round and saw all the players faced inwards having a laugh and chat together and I thought to myself 'that's why you do this.'

"Steve's brother, Jacques Bernard, was on board and his dad, Tony, which made it all the more special."

Priory take treble chance

CHRISTCHURCH have already got three trophies on the shelf – and the season hasn't even begun!

Not only did they reign supreme as 'Kings of Ringwood' last week, but they also won the Steve Bernard Memorial Trophy game at Chichester City and Monday's Gerry Page Memorial Cup against Wimborne Town.

Steve Bernard, affectionately known as Stevie B, was tragically killed in a car crash on the A27 near Chichester in November 2005, aged just 18.

The two clubs meet annually in his memory and it was Christchurch who came out on top 3-0 this year with goals by Paul Roberts (2) and Ben Osborne.

The previous evening Priory had booked their place in the final of the 'Kings of Ringwood' tournament at Ringwood Town FC by beating Bisterne United 3-0 through Paul Rideout (2) and Sam Griffin.

With hosts Ringwood surprisingly beaten on penalties in their opening match, it left Christchurch up against Town's conquerors Bisterne Rangers in the final.

ON TARGET: Christchurch's Paul Rideout, left.

It turned out to be something of a breeze for Graham Kemp's Sydenhams Premier side, who showed their pedigree with a runaway 7-0 victory at the Canotec Stadium.

Ben Osborne opened the scoring after just three minutes and then doubled his tally 17 minutes later with a tap-in from six yards.

Bisterne Rangers worked tirelessly to stifle Priory's free-flowing football but were fighting a losing battle as man-of-the-match Sam Griffin and Harry Cooper weighed in with two goals apiece and Marc Fairbrother chipped in with one.

Earlier Bisterne United had won the third/fourth-placed play-off match against disappointed hosts Ringwood who, after a 2-2 draw, went down 5-4 on penalties.

It was the second slice of penalty heartbreak for Ringwood, who had lost a marathon shootout 10-9 to Bisterne Rangers in their opening match.

Along with the 'Kings of Ringwood' trophy, Christchurch were presented with a £250 kit voucher by sponsors Jon Gittens Sports.

Kemp's side kept the winning theme going on Monday night, beating Wimborne 3-1 in a match played in memory of late club stalwart Gerry Page. Mark Smith, Dan Crutchley and Jack Lovell found the target for Priory, while Jamie Davidson bagged the Magpies' reply.

Non-league News

Wyvern honour for Gos

GOSPORT Borough have been selected to stage the first ever match in the new Wyvern Combination League.

The officers of the league decided it would be fitting to have an official opening fixture with a commemorative programme and invitations sent out to county officials and special guests.

To this end they have chosen the Premier Division match between Gosport Borough's reserves and Sholing's reserves to showcase the new league.

The fixture, originally scheduled for Wednesday, August 24, has been brought forward to Friday, August 19 with a 7.45pm kick-off at Privett Park.

"Our club are obviously delighted and honoured to stage this match," said Brian Cosgrave, now entering his 21st season as Gosport Borough secretary.

"We hope that it will be the start of a long and successful venture for the Wyvern League.

"It is the culmination of a lot of hard work by many people to achieve the birth of a league that should give all the senior clubs involved the necessary platform to improve the level of quality of reserve team football and, in turn, improve the support to their respective first teams."

Ross to the rescue

FORMER AFC Totton defender Ross Lloyd, pictured below, hit a stunning last-ditch equaliser to rescue Wimborne Town a pre-season friendly draw at Hamworthy United last Saturday.

Lloyd's thumping 20-yard blast cannoned in off the post as the game ended 3-3.

Centre-back Lloyd has spurned the approaches of rival clubs and pledged to spend a second season at Wimborne.

The 25-year-old, who has just completed his first year at Cuthbury, featured in the Magpie's debut campaign in the Southern League last term.

"I'm delighted that Ross has re-signed for us," said manager Steve Cuss. "He had a couple of clubs interested in him, but he attended pre-season training with us and decided to stay.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESULTS – SEE BACK PAGE

Non-league Football

Did You Know?

Ex-Saints team up

TWO ex-Saints have been reunited at Forest Green Rovers.

Nineteen-year-old midfielder James Rowe has agreed a two-year deal with the Blue Square Bet Premier club where former St Mary's coach Dave Hockaday is manager.

The Wantage-based teenager is delighted to have put pen to paper for Rovers after waiting to be officially released from Brian McDermott's Reading on July 31.

"I am delighted and excited at joining Rovers and look forward to a bright future at the club," said Rowe, who started his career under Hockaday at the Saints Academy before switching to the Royals.

Hockaday explained: "I have known James since he was a young lad at Southampton and I have kept tabs on him ever since.

"He called me off his own back to come and train with us and has fitted in extremely well. He fully deserves this deal."

Reserve boss hunt

QK SOUTHAMPTON FC are looking for an experienced manager to take over the running of their reserves in the Hampshire Premier League Combination Division.

The position is an integral part of QK's management team as the person appointed will be tasked with progressing players into the first team from either the youth set-up or externally.

For further information please contact first-team boss Pat McManus on 07976 896065 or club secretary Don Campbell on 023 8078 1362 or 07801 550337.

Op for Carl

CARL Poore is set to go under the knife on Monday in a bid to cure an ankle problem.

The Poole Town captain was stretchered off during the Dolphins' FA Vase semi-final clash at Whitley Bay on April 2 after sustaining what he believed was a ligament injury.

But further scans showed more damage and Poore will now miss the start of Dolphins' Southern League campaign.

Price cut

AS a gesture of goodwill to fans, Havant & Waterlooville are reducing the admission price for Tuesday's final pre-season fixture against Southampton under-21s at Westleigh Park (7.45pm).

Entry will be £5 for all.

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

Bowers calls off the ref hounds

GE Hamble co-boss Danny Bowers says his side must stop hounding referees if they are going to achieve their full potential in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

Although cup commitments had much to do with the Planemakers finishing a slightly disappointing 12th last term, they were not helped by their poor disciplinary record.

And the Follands Park outfit are still paying a high price for that indiscipline with skipper James Roden, attacking midfielder Jamie Barron and defender Scott Gilham all due three-match bans, starting with next Saturday's rearranged opening-day fixture at Hamworthy United.

"All three of them have suspensions hanging over them from last year," said Bowers.

"It's time now for everyone – including me – to get off referees' backs if we want to achieve something.

"If I don't get at referees it's less likely the players will and that was proved in the five games at the end of last season.

"I said that no one was allowed to get on the referee's case and, sure enough, the rub of the green started going with us.

"If you stop putting pressure on officials, things are more likely to go your way."

With Dan Turner and Lee Wood brought in to plug their leaky defence and Sam Doswell signing on again after trials with Sutton United, Hamble look in good shape for the new season.

Spearheaded by the 60-plus goal partnership of Jamie Musselwhite and Ashley Jarvis, they already have arguably the strongest strike force in the league, but Bowers has added to his attacking options.

Young former Sholing and Winchester City hitman Doug Rowe has found the target in pre-season and Hamble have this week secured the signature of ex-Gosport and Andover left winger Rory Williams.

"Rory was up at Andover when I was there and I had him here on loan from Gosport towards the end of the season before last when we won Division One," said Bowers.

"Dougie Rowe has really impressed in pre-season. Not only is he a fantastic option up front, but he can play on either wing as well.

"Dougie and Rory could be massive assets for us.

SUSPENDED PAIR: Hamble skipper James Roden, above, and Jamie Barron, left.

"When we played Andover the other week, Mat Jones, who has played a lot of Southern League football, said we should be challenging for the league with the squad we've got.

"He said we've got a side full of Wessex stars and Southern League players with probably the two best centre forwards in the league.

"I hadn't really looked at it like that, but I think this is the strongest squad we've ever had at this level and I know that if we play to our full potential we can cause one or two upsets along the way.

"The biggest thing for us is to get points under our belts early doors.

"If we're going achieve what we're capable of, we need to make a good start."

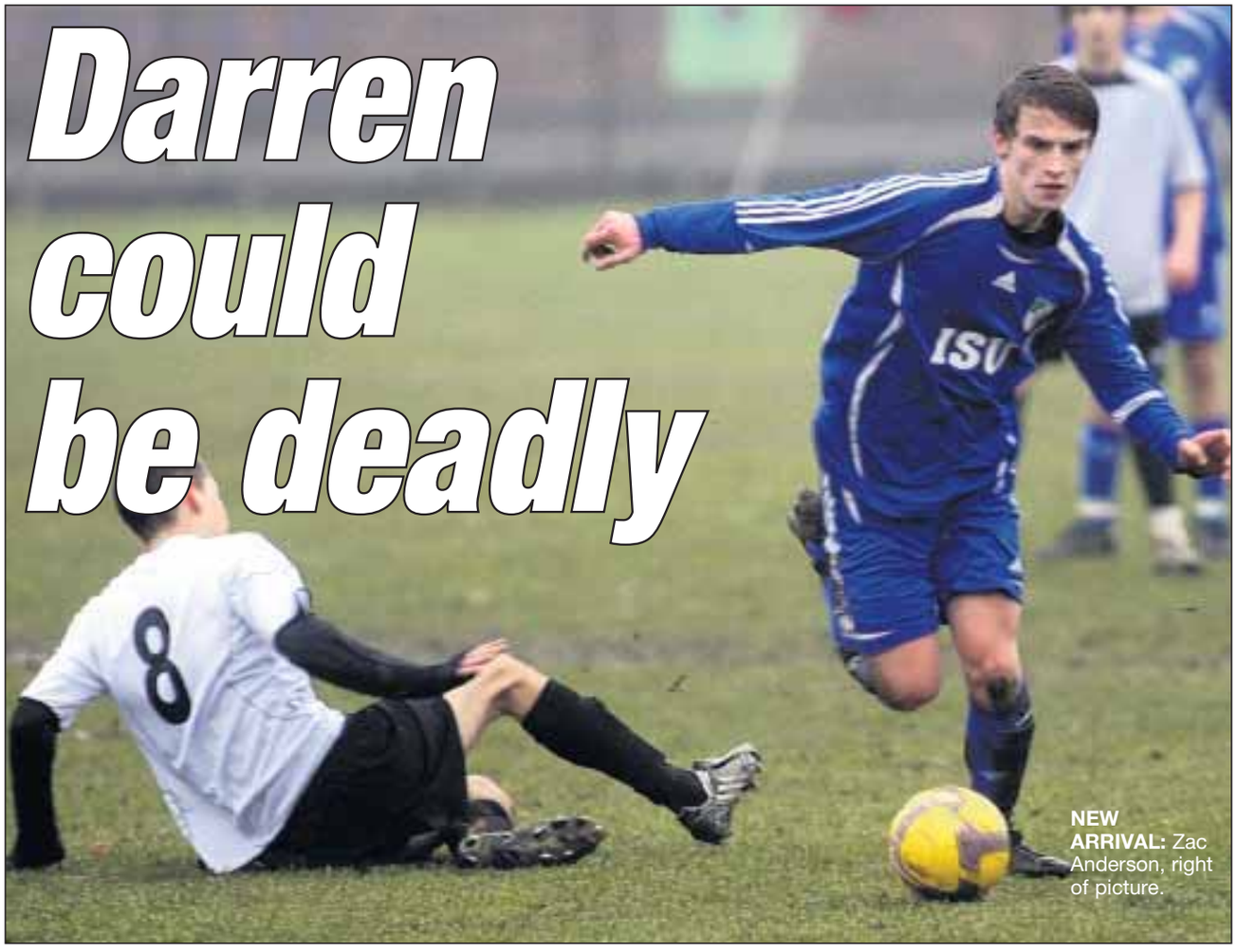
● Hamble had originally been due to kick off the season away at Romsey Town with Hamworthy United hosting Bournemouth Poppies.

But with Hamworthy and Bournemouth paired together in the FA Cup extra preliminary round the following week, the Dorset duo did not want to meet on consecutive Saturdays.

GOT A NON LEAGUE STORY? EMAIL wendy.gee@dailyechoc.o.uk

Non-league Football

Darren could be deadly



NEW ARRIVAL: Zac Anderson, right of picture.

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NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

MANAGER Paul Wiltshire expects new Fawley striker Darren Morris to make a nuisance of himself with Sydenhams Premier defenders this season.

Wiltshire saw potential in Morris from their days together with Eastleigh reserves and is surprised the striker has yet to get a proper first-team break.

After leaving Eastleigh, Morris banged in the goals for AFC Totton reserves and was subsequently snapped up by Southern One South & West outfit Sholing.

But, despite scoring 23 times in 21 League/League Cup appearances for Sholing's Wessex Combination-winning side last term, his first-team path was blocked by the likes of Lee Wort, Kevin Gibbens and Barry Mason.

"Darren was a first-team substitute under Bairdy (Ian Baird) at Eastleigh and then went to Totton and Sholing, but he's never really been given a chance to break through," said Wiltshire.

"He's generally been playing for reserve sides, so this will be his first full season of first-team football coming up.

"Darren is quite a handful on his day. He's a big, strong lad who scores goals and I'm surprised really that no one has ever given him a chance. Before he went to Eastleigh he was only playing local football and people said he should give it a go at a higher standard, which he has. I'm expecting a lot from him this year.

"He was a bit behind on the fitness side when he came to us, but he's getting his sharpness back."

After learning the ropes alongside former manager Richie Coxall towards the end of last season, Wiltshire has taken full charge of the Oilers, assisted by former AFC Totton reserve boss Colin Lane.

He has already stamped his mark on the side with a string of summer signings, including central defender Kieran Earl who has been reunited with brothers Callum and Elliot at Long Lane following two seasons away at Totton & Eling.

"Kieran's a very good addition to the squad in an area we were lacking in last season," said Wiltshire.

"We've played friendlies with all three brothers in the back four – Callum at left-back, Elliot at right-back and Kieran at centre-back.

"It's a shame we don't have another Earl brother to make it a full house!" he smiled.

The new management duo both have sons in the Fawley ranks.

Wiltshire's eldest, Adam – a summer signing from New Milton Town – has joined brother Sam at the Waterside Sports & Social club, while Lane's son Nick – formerly of AFC Totton's reserves – will strengthen central defence.

Three other members of the AFC Totton second string have followed manager Lane to Fawley – left-sided midfielder Steve Hall, central midfielder Zac Anderson and striker Aaron Blaxall.

Right-back Dave Downie has rejoined the Oilers after a season's break and Wiltshire has signed two promising young goalkeepers – Dan Loader from New Milton and Jon Page from Ringwood – as competition for Denis Wheeler.

Fawley's only loss is centre forward Craig Feeney to league rivals Totton & Eling.

Looking forward to the new season Wiltshire said: "We've most definitely got more firepower than last season and we should give most sides a good game.

"No disrespect to Richie (Coxall), but he's taken a step back and this is my season now and I'm looking forward to it.

"We've got a nice mix of young lads and a bit of experience and we're playing some good football. I like my teams to get the ball on the grass and pass it. I was brought up that way and it's how I like to play.

"Other managers like a longer game, but that's not for me. I want my team to entertain the crowd."

OH BROTHER: Kieran Earl, left, has been reunited with brother Callum, far left, at Fawley for the forthcoming Sydenhams Wessex League season.

THE BEST NON LEAGUE PREVIEWS ARE IN FRIDAY'S ECHO EVERY WEEK

Did You Know?

Sub Rob nets two

NEW signing Rob Tambling scored twice in a minute after going on as a substitute in Fareham Town's 4-0 friendly win over Paulsgrove on Thursday.

But for the woodwork, ex-Gosport Borough youngster Tambling, signed from Hayling United, would have had a quick-fire hat-trick.

He was joined on the scoresheet by Rob Stock and Wayne Boud for the Creeksiders.

"What was pleasing was how it is all coming together, especially at the back," said Town boss Matt Parr.

"All pre-season we have looked like scoring and I don't believe that will be our shortfall.

"The back four looked solid and had some excellent protection from Dan Byrne."

Fareham's new floodlights are due to be delivered to Cams Alders on Monday.

Ex-Cherries don boots

JOHN 'Willo' Williams will take charge of a star-studded team of ex-AFC Bournemouth players in a charity match at New Milton's Fawcett's Field home tomorrow (Sunday, 3pm).

Mark Morris, Richard Cooke, Paul Morrell, Russell Beardsmore and Paul Wood will line up for a Cherries veterans XI against Archer's Arrows, a team once coached by Williams.

Ex-Liverpool, Saints and Cherries midfielder Jimmy Case could also feature, while Mike McElhatton, Peter Johnson, Dave Morris and Joe Roach are also on the guest list.

Entry to Fawcett's Field is £1 for adults and 50p for under-16s.

Town plan

RINGWOOD Town are seeking additional back-up staff to aid manager Graham Pope's Wyvern Combination side.

Pope, who enjoyed spells with Wimbledon and Sevenoaks during his playing career, will work closely with the managers of Town's first team and proposed two under-18 sides (one Dorset, one Hampshire) as the club look to blood young talent into senior football.

Telephone Ringwood secretary Aubrey Hodder on 01590 679156 or 07754 460501 if interested – or email him at *hodder888@btinternet.com* Graham Pope can be contacted on 07921 297623.

FOOTBALL FIXTURES

Sunday, August 7
FA Community Shield: Man City v Man Utd (2.30pm).
Npower Championship: West Ham v Cardiff (1pm)
Friendlies: West Brom v Parma, Wigan v Villarreal.

Monday, August 8
Friendlies: AFC Telford v Wolves, Llanelli v Man Utd XI, Christchurch v Gosport Borough, Winchester City v Sholing

Tuesday, August 9
Carling Cup first round: Crystal Palace v Crawley Town, Hartlepool v Sheffield Utd, Accrington Stanley v Scunthorpe, Barnsley v Morecambe, Bournemouth v Dag & Red, Brighton v Gillingham, Bristol City v Swindon, Burnley v Burton Albion, Bury v Coventry, Charlton v Reading, Cheltenham v MK Dons, Derby v Shrewsbury, Doncaster v Tranmere, Exeter v Yeovil, Hereford v Brentford, Hull v Macclesfield, Ipswich v Northampton, Leeds v Bradford, Nott'm Forest v Notts County, Oldham v Carlisle, Plymouth v Millwall, Portsmouth v Barnet, Port Vale v Huddersfield, Preston v Crewe, Rochdale v Chesterfield, Rotherham v Leicester, Southampton v Torquay, Southend v Leyton Orient, Stevenage v Peterborough, Walsall v Middlesbrough, West Ham v Aldershot, Wycombe v Colchester.
Friendlies: Blackfield & Langley v Eastleigh Res, Havant & Waterlooville v SAINTS U21s
Team Solent v Sholing Res (Hardmoor, 6.45)

Wednesday, August 10
Carling Cup 1st rd: Bristol Rovers v Watford, Oxford Utd v Cardiff.
Internationals: Rep of Ireland v Croatia, Scotland v Denmark, Wales v Australia, England v Netherlands.
Friendly: Bangor City v Man Utd XI.

Thursday, August 11
Carling Cup 1st rd: Sheff Wed v Blackpool.
Friendly: Braishfield v Hythe Aztecs (opposite Concorde Club, 6.45)

Friday, August 12
Conference: Forest Green v Stockport (7.45pm).
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Romsey Town v Bournemouth Poppies (7.45).

Saturday, August 13
Premier League: Blackburn v Wolves, Fulham v Aston Villa, Liverpool v Sunderland, QPR v Bolton, Tottenham v Everton, Wigan v Norwich, Newcastle v Arsenal (5.30pm).
Championship: Barnsley v Southampton, Birmingham v Coventry, Crystal Palace v Burnley, Doncaster v West Ham, Ipswich v Hull, Leeds v Middlesbrough, Leicester v Reading, Millwall v Nott'm Forest, Portsmouth v Brighton, Watford v Derby.
League One: Bournemouth v Sheff Wed, Bury v Carlisle, Chesterfield v Stevenage, Colchester v Wycombe, Exeter v MK Dons, Hartlepool v Walsall, Leyton Orient v Tranmere, Notts County v Charlton, Rochdale v Huddersfield, Scunthorpe v Preston, Sheffield Utd v Brentford, Yeovil v Oldham.
League Two: Accrington Stanley v Southend, Aldershot v Northampton, Barnet v Port Vale, Bristol Rovers v Torquay, Burton Albion v Shrewsbury, Cheltenham v Swindon, Crawley Town v Macclesfield, Crewe v Gillingham, Dag & Red v AFC Wimbledon, Hereford v Morecambe, Oxford Utd v Bradford, Plymouth v Rotherham.
Conference: Barrow v Tamworth, Darlington v Braintree Town, Ebbsfleet United v York, Grimsby v Fleetwood Town, Hayes & Yeading v Alfreton Town, Kettering v Newport County, Kidderminster v Gateshead, Mansfield v Bath City, Southport v Lincoln City, Wrexham v Cambridge Utd, AFC Telford v Luton (7.45pm).
BLUE SQUARE BET SOUTH
Boreham Wood v Havant & Waterlooville, Chelmsford v Truro, Dover v Dorchester, Eastbourne Borough v Farnborough, Eastleigh v Basingstoke, Hampton & Richmond v Bromley, Maidenhead v Tonbridge Angels, Salisbury v Thurrock, Sutton v Woking, Welling v Staines, Weston-super-Mare v Dartford.
EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE
Premier Division: Arlesey v AFC Totton, Banbury v Hitchin, Bedford v Frome, Chesham v Barwell, Evesham v Bashley, Hemel Hempstead v Leamington, Oxford City v Redditch, St Albans v Cirencester, Stourbridge v Chippenham, Swindon Supermarine v Brackley, Weymouth v Cambridge City.
Division One South & West: Bideford v Bishops Cleeve, Cinderford v Didcot, Clevedon v Sholing, Gosport Borough v Tiverton, Hungerford v Bridgwater, North Leigh v Mangotsfield, Paulton Rovers v Halesowen, Poole Town v Stourport Swifts, Taunton v Abingdon Utd, Yate v Wimborne.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Alton Town v Alresford Town, Bemerton Heath v Brading Town, Blackfield & Langley v Winchester City, Fareham Town v Totton & Eling, Hamworthy Utd v GE Hamble, Hayling Utd v Lymington Town, Horndean v Downton, Laverstock & Ford v New Milton Town, Moneyfields v Christchurch, Newport IoW v Fawley AFC.
Division One: Brockenhurst v Andover New Street, Cowes Sports v Amesbury Town, Fleet Spurs v US Portsmouth, Petersfield Town v Ringwood Town, Pewsey Vale v Team Solent, Tadley Calleva v Hythe & Dibden, Verwood Town v AFC Portchester, Warminster Town v Stockbridge, Whitchurch Utd v East Cowes Vics.
PUMA ENGINEERING HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE
Division One: AFC Stoneham v Hedge End Rangers, Clanfield v Winchester Castle, Colden Common v Locks Heath, Hamble Club v Bournemouth Sports, Liss Athletic v Overton, Paulsgrove v Fleetlands, QK Southampton v AFC Aldermaston, Sporting BW v Liphook Utd, University of Portsmouth v Otterbourne.
Combination Division: Fleetlands v AFC Aldermaston, Liphook v Locks Heathy, Otterbourne v Liss Athletic, Winchester Castle v AFC Stoneham.

Non-league Football

Totton's plan is to coach youngsters

Blockbuster!

BASINGSTOKE Town hope to squeeze in one last friendly before opening their Blue Square Bet South campaign at Eastleigh next Saturday.

Last night's (Friday's) match against a Reading XI was scheduled to be Town's last pre-season test, but manager Frank Gray is trying to organise an extra one for mid-week,

Basingstoke were in action at Thatcham Town on Tuesday night, losing 2-1 to the Evo-Stik Southern One South & West side.

All the goals came in the first half with Stoke's Tim Sills cancelling Scott Rees's opener for Thatcham only for Town goalkeeper Chay Morris to gift Marc Green a 29th-minute winner when he made a hash of a back pass.

"We conceded two bad goals," admitted Stoke boss Frank Gray.

"The pitch was not great, but some more of the lads got 90 minutes in their legs which was the main aim."

Stoke had won 2-1 at Hungerford Town the previous Thursday with former Eastleigh winger Shaun McAuley smashing home a last-gasp blockbuster to seal victory.

The ex-Spitfire went on as a midfield substitute, neatly turned his man and fired home from outside the box in the final minute.

"Shaun gets a bit more freedom playing for us than he is perhaps used to," said Gray.

"In the past he has always been used out wide, but playing in a midfield three gives him licence to get forward and hurt teams in the middle of the pitch."

FREEDOM: Ex-Eastleigh winger Shaun McAuley in action for new club Basingstoke.

Wendy Gee
wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk
NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

AFC Totton have taken another giant stride towards establishing themselves as a community club.

The Stags have launched the AFC Totton Community Trust designed to provide coaching for local children including those with disabilities and learning problems and those that are disaffected.

Coaching will be delivered by Level 2 coaches – including some AFC Totton players – all of whom have been CRB-checked by the Football Association.

The idea is the brainchild of Stags striker Michael Charles, inset below, who previously ran junior coaching sessions at his old club Farnborough.

Totton chairman Phil Shephard said: "It fits in very well with our medium to long-term strategy of developing AFC Totton as a community-based club.

"It is another building block put into place in our blueprint following the announcement last month of our tie-up with the Pace Youth set-up.

"This is seen as a continuing development of our academy strategy for AFC Totton.

"Our aim is to develop young, talented players and achieve the FA Charter Standard throughout this club."

The AFC Totton Community Trust kicks off with a two-week summer coaching school, starting on Monday (August 8).

More than 30 local children have already signed up for the 9.30am-3.30pm sessions which will run from Monday to Friday at the Stags' impressive, new Testwood Stadium headquarters in Salisbury Road.

A full week's coaching is £60 (Junior Stags £50) or there is a daily rate of £15.

There are still places available which can be booked by emailing chairman@afctotton.com

The Community Trust is also working on the development of coaching sessions with local schools and Tyro League teams and plans to have after-school coaching clubs in place by September.

Businesses are being asked to support the initiative to enable the Trust to put on more courses in the local community and reach out to more children.

Any interest business should contact Lucy Richmond at commercial@afctotton.com for further details.

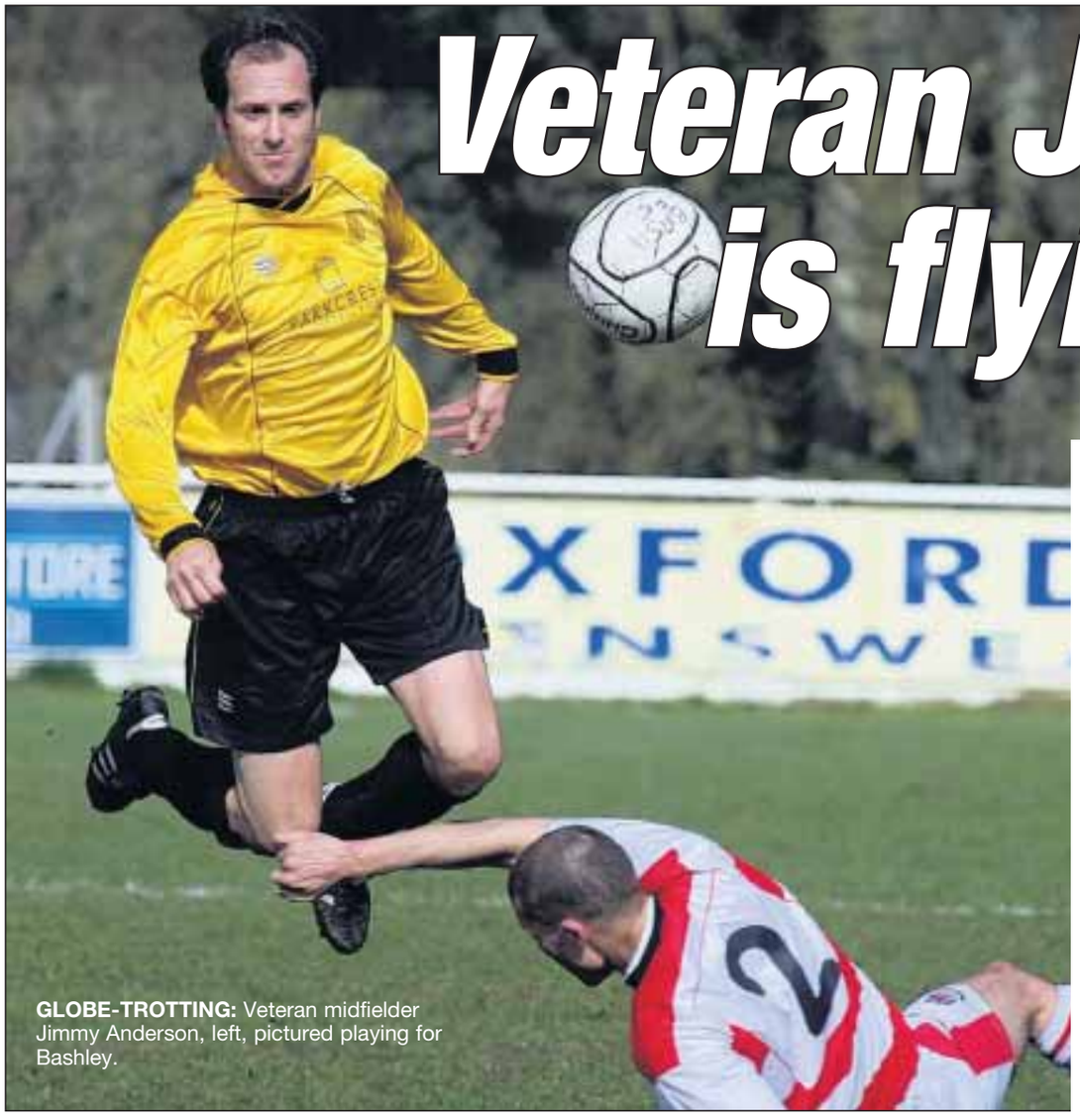
Meanwhile AFC Totton have broken through the 100 barrier in season-ticket sales for 2011/12.

Having just achieved promotion to the Evo-Stik Southern League Premier Division, the Stags have increased their number of season-ticket holders by 30 per cent.

NON-LEAGUE PREVIEWS APPEAR EVERY FRIDAY IN THE DAILY ECHO

Non-league Football

Veteran Jim is flying



GLOBE-TROTTING: Veteran midfielder Jimmy Anderson, left, pictured playing for Bashley.

VETERAN midfielder Jimmy Anderson will be dividing his time between South America and Totton & Eling next season.

The former Bashley, Lymington & New Milton and Brockenhurst player is one of ten new senior players to have signed forms for Kev Dawtry's Sydenhams Premier Division side.

But Anderson, a geologist, will only be available for half the matches because of his work commitments abroad.

"Jimmy's job takes him away to South America three weeks out of every six, but we'll work round his availability," said Dawtry.

"I've known Jimmy for years and he's friendly with a lot of our lads.

"He came to training and we had a chat and the catch is that he's not available week in, week out.

"But it's ideal to have someone of his experience and ability in the squad.

"He played against Bemerton in the Linden Homes Trophy last Sunday having only got off the plane on Saturday and he looked pretty fit and pretty decent. I don't think fitness will be an issue for him.

"If we stick him next to (ex-Saints and

Wendy Gee
wendy.gee@dailyecho.co.uk
NON-LEAGUE REPORTER

Norway utility man) Jo Tessem we'd have an average age of about 74 in the middle of the park!" Dawtry laughed.

"But Jo played for us over the weekend and he looked good too.

"They've both got a lot of experience – international football in Jo's case - and tremendous ability."

The Millers' midfield has been further strengthened by the return of Matt Monk from Brockenhurst and the arrival of another experienced campaigner Terry Cox from Hythe & Dibden - plus Steve Marwood's switch from centre half to the team's engine room.

"With Mark Lloyd leaving (for Lymington Town), we needed to get someone else in there and Steve has always told me he's a midfielder," said Dawtry. "He's got the chance to prove it now and he's looking very good."

Defence-wise Totton & Eling have welcomed back Lee Thorne from AFC Totton and recruited centre-half Craig Vigar from Hythe & Dibden and full-backs Steve Green and Jon Brock from Lymington Town and Blackfield & Langley respectively.

Up front Paddy James from Romsey and Craig Feeney from Fawley have looked sharp in pre-season and will have Paul Miller for competition following his arrival from Hythe & Dibden.

The Millers have also signed three Totton College youngsters on coach Tessem's recommendation – defender Ollie Leonard, midfielder Josh Armstrong and forward Ben Hatch.

On the debit side Totton & Eling have lost several players from last season, including Lloyd, Adam Lowther, Ben'yela Ngwa, Kieran Earl and Danny Steer.

But there are no hard feelings from Dawtry, who said: "I can't criticise players for moving, that's what happens. I've done it myself in the past.

"We've lost a few, but we've got a good bunch of lads here. They're all experienced or up-and-coming Wessex League players and I'm happy with what we've got.

"We're going to try and win every game and enjoy ourselves while we're doing it. Getting enjoyment from football is the main thing for me."

MORE NON-LEAGUE - PAGES 32-35 & 39

● EAST Cowes Vics' Whippingham HQ has been given a summer facelift.

The Beatrice Avenue ground, which played a leading role in staging the recent NatWest Island Games football tournament, has been further improved.

● A new entrance has been created for paying spectators along with a separate entrance for players, officials and disabled fans.

● The main stand, only a year old, has been re-painted, with welcoming signs for supporters, as have the fascia boards round the ground.

● The clubhouse has a new porch and double glazed windows have been purchased which will improve the lighting inside.

● New fencing has been fitted to the front and rear of the club, while the pitch looks better than it has in years.

● A portable building which was given to the club has been completely renovated and sited next to the clubhouse.

● It will be used for hospitality on match days and named after the Sydenhams Division One club's former president Mick Reed who sadly passed away in January.

FIND THE BALL

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FIND THE BALL is a test of skill and football knowledge and is open to readers of the Southampton, Bournemouth, Dorset Echos, Brighton Argus and Sunday Independent, Plymouth.

You have to use your skill and judgement to determine the exact centre of the ball.

Mark an X with a ballpoint pen on the picture where you consider that position to be – clear rubber stamps and self adhesive labels will also be accepted.

Every coupon will be carefully examined and the jackpot prize will be paid to the entrant whose cross marks the exact centre of the ball when the photograph was taken.

If the Jackpot is not won, £1,000 will be added to next week's jackpot and £50 will be added to the nearest-miss prize.

The nearest-miss prize will be paid out to the competitor whose cross is nearest to the centre of the ball when there is no jackpot winner.

When a jackpot has been won the next week's prize reverts back to £6,000 and the nearest-miss prize at £1,000.

If the Jackpot is not won after 45 weeks, when standing at £50,000, three nearest miss prizes will be awarded totalling £24,000 – with a first prize of £12,000, a second prize of £8,000 and a third prize of £4,000.

The jackpot for the following week will be £26,000 with £1,000 being added each week. The nearest miss prize will be £2,000 with £50 added each week until the jackpot prize reaches £50,000.

If there is still no entry showing the exact centre of the ball, the process is repeated until there is an exact centre of the ball winner.

If there is more than one winner the jackpot will be shared and, similarly, if there is more than one runner-up the nearest miss prize will also be shared.

RESULTS

CLOSING DATE FOR POSTAL ENTRIES
Wednesday, 10 August 2011
Names of winners will be published on **Saturday, 13 August or Sunday 14 August 2011**

Winners

Competition number **S30**

JACKPOT WINNER **NO WINNER**

CONGRATULATIONS
Mrs J Ashby, Southampton, Hants.
who wins the Runner Up prize of £1,550

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Mrs H Cassell, Southampton, Hants
Mr M Cox, Southampton, Hants
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An incident in a Bournemouth v Bristol Rovers match

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Non-league Football

Bournemouth Pop in for early fixture

ROMSEY Town will stage the opening fixture of the new Sydenhams Premier Division season next Friday (August 12, 7.45) when Bournemouth Poppies visit the Bypass Ground.

Wayne Mew's men had been scheduled to kick-off their 2011/12 campaign at home to GE Hamble (formerly Hamble ASSC) on Saturday, August 13, while Poppies were due to visit Hamworthy United.

But Hamworthy and Poppies have been drawn together in an identical fixture in the FA Cup extra preliminary round the following week and the Dorset duo did not want to meet on consecutive Saturdays.

The league have therefore agreed to send Poppies to Romsey, while Hamble will visit Hamworthy on Saturday 13.

It means Romsey can go ahead with their original plan to stage their opening fixture on Friday night in a bid to attract a bigger gate to the Bypass Ground.

Manager Mew said: "It was our idea to switch the game to the Friday because we might get more through the gate.

"We had asked Hamble if they could play on the Friday, but they couldn't do it because (co-boss) Danny Bowers wouldn't have been able to make it.

"Bournemouth, though, were happy to play and hopefully we'll get a few more spectators in.

"We've got the opportunity to play four Friday night games in a season and I'll try and utilise all of them.

"People tend to come out to football on Fridays and, also, it gives us the opportunity to get out to a game on a Saturday and look at other sides."

Mew's only slight quibble is that Hamworthy and Poppies were given the nod to avoid a repeat fixture by the league whereas Romsey weren't.

"We've got Fawley in the league on September 17 and again in the FA Vase on September 24 and I asked for the league game to be changed but they wouldn't do it," said Mew. "I shall be getting back to them about that one!"

Romsey, who have confirmed the signing of striker Ben White from Alton Town, were beaten 4-1 by AFC Totton in a friendly at the By-Pass Ground on Tuesday.

Considering the high-calibre side Stuart Ritchie's Southern Premier new boys put out, Mew was well pleased with Town's performance.

"We took the lead through Simon De'Ath (28 minutes) and they scored two just before half-time – one of them penalty – which knocked the stuffing out of us a bit," he said.

"We then held them for about 35 minutes in the second half before we changed the side around and conceded two late goals.

"It was a good workout for us watched by a good crowd."

Stefan Brown (43), Mike Gosney (44pen), Nathaniel Sherborne (81) and Michael Charles (83) scored for Totton.

Whites signings

SECOND SPELL: Kyle Haynes.

SALISBURY City have signed 18-year-old striker Claudio Herbert after some impressive pre-season performances by the teenager.

A promising youth/reserve player, Herbert was given his break into the Southern League football at Andover last season by former Lions boss Andy Leader and he is now knocking on the door of Blue Square Bet South football for the Whites.

Salisbury player-manager Darrell Clarke said: "He shows great promise and did particularly well against Frome on Tuesday."

Also new in at Whites this week are two loan signings – Kyle Haynes and Connor Gough.

For Cheltenham Town right-back Haynes it will be second spell at the Raymond McEnhill Stadium having played for the Whites last season. He has this time been signed on a three-month loan.

Gough, a 6ft 5in goalkeeper, arrives from Charlton Athletic having been on the books of Crystal Palace and Gillingham.

Salisbury dreww their friendly 1-1 at Frome following a poor first-half performance Mike Perrott volleyed the Evo-Stik Southern Premier new boys into a 12th-minute lead.

Salisbury's Dan Fitchett had a cross-shot cleared off the line shortly after going on for the second half and, in the end, it took an own goal to level the scores.

Adam Kelly's curling cross to the far post was cleared, but only as far as Dean Flockton, who beat his own keeper.

"It was a very disappointing performance in the first half, but much better in the second," summed up Clarke.

"Fair play to Frome who have had a great pre-season. Bristol City's first team came here and only won 3-2 and Frome beat Eastleigh (Reserves) comfortably 3-0, so we're definitely amongst it.

"The Hayes & Yeading game was a good win for us against higher league opposition, but you win, draw or lose in pre-season and it counts for nothing. It's all about fitness."

A late strike from Clarke had given Salisbury their first pre-season win, 2-1 against Hayes & Yeading last Saturday.

Former Winchester City and Bashley man Kelly opened the scoring against the Blue Square Bet Premier side on 55 minutes before Phillip John levelled with 13 minutes to go.

Clarke settled it with a rocket shot on 87 minutes.

Top man

BLACKFIELD & Langley boss Louis Bell has described recent arrival Ashley Johnson from Romsey Town as "a first-class signing."

The right-sided player was a relative unknown on the Wessex scene when Wayne Mew took him to Romsey last season, but Bell knows Johnson of old.

"I worked with Ashley at the Portsmouth school of excellence and always thought he would become a good player," said Bell.

"We've amended his game slightly.

"He was used to hitting long balls, but we've shortened his game a bit.

"He has worked really hard in training and has pulled up trees in the pre-season."

City pair

WINCHESTER City have added two young full-backs to their Sydenhams Premier title-chasing squad.

Manager Guy Butters has signed former Saints Academy youngster Lee Nicholas and fellow 17-year-old Liam Finnegan from Havant & Waterlooville.

Right-back Nicholas, who spent six years with Saints, will provide cover for Dan Reeve.

Finnegan, who had the chance to join Gosport Borough, adds competition at left-back.

Fan-tastic

THE Spitfires Supporters' Club is funding training equipment for Eastleigh's first team and development squad next season.

The equipment was requested by manager Ian Baird and TSSC kindly came up with the funding.

Eastleigh chairman Paul Murray acknowledged: "It is great to see the Supporters' Club help with the development of our players. Their support in this way is much appreciated."

Old boy

FORMER Salisbury City loan striker Reece Connolly could find himself up against the Whites this season.

Along with defender Doug Bergqvist, Connolly has joined City's Blue Square Bet South rivals Farnborough on a six-month loan deal from Aldershot Town.

Connolly, a former Crystal Palace trainee, scored twice in 11 appearances for Salisbury during their Conference National season of 2009/10. He has also spent time on loan with Dorchester Town.

Wanted

WARSASH Warriors under-14s are looking for two players to boost their squad for the coming Southampton Tyro League Division One season.

Warriors were promoted as Division Two champions last season.

Any players interested in joining a friendly, family-orientated club with an excellent team spirit and their own training facilities and excellent coaching should call Mick on 07973 507755.

Ref talk

EASTLEIGH Referees Society are meeting at Eastleigh FC on Monday August 8 (7.30pm start).

Guest speaker is Dean Mohareb, a Football League referee and Referees Manager for the Football association. All are welcome.

MORE NON-LEAGUE - SEE PAGES 32-37

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Hampshire Cricket Spotlight

Did You Know?

T20 STATISTICS 2011

Hampshire batting

	Inns	NO	Rns	HS	Ave
JM Vince	14	3	413	85*	37.54
ND McKenzie	13	4	348	89*	38.66
JHK Adams	15	3	289	47	24.08
MJ Lumb	9	1	197	53	24.62
SM Ervine	9	3	170	45	28.33
Shahid Afridi	7	0	100	36	14.28
AD Mascarenhas	8	1	85	25	12.14
DG Cork	6	3	43	21	14.33
BAC Howell	6	2	43	16	10.75
N Pothas	5	3	34	15*	17.00
LA Dawson	1	0	26	26	26.00
Imran Tahir	2	2	18	17*	
AM Bates	1	0	10	10	10.00
DR Briggs	4	2	8	4*	4.00
CP Wood	1	0	3	3	3.00
SP Jones	0				

Hampshire bowling

	Runs	Wkts	BB	Ave
AD Mascarenhas	296	20	3-19	14.80
DR Briggs	310	17	4-17	18.23
DG Cork	299	16	2-23	18.68
Shahid Afridi	161	14	5-20	11.50
Imran Tahir	249	14	3-13	17.78
CP Wood	135	6	2-17	22.50
SP Jones	33	3	2-2	11.00
SM Ervine	12	1	1-9	12.00

Durham batting

	Inns	NO	Runs	HS	Ave
P Mustard	12	1	354	75	32.18
ID Blackwell	12	2	284	77	28.40
DM Benkenstein	10	2	251	60	31.37
GJ Muchall	12	0	249	64	20.75
DA Miller	9	2	202	54	28.85
GR Breese	10	4	144	34	24.00
LE Plunkett	8	2	120	41	20.00
PD Collingwood	9	0	96	29	10.66
SG Borthwick	3	2	40	30	40.00
WR Smith	3	2	29	11*	29.00
ME Claydon	3	2	25	19	25.00
C Rushworth	3	2	2	2	2.00
G Onions	1	1	0	0*	

Durham bowling

	Runs	Wkts	BB	Ave
PD Collingwood	157	16	5-6	9.81
GR Breese	256	13	3-23	19.69
LE Plunkett	332	13	5-31	25.53
ME Claydon	354	13	3-6	27.23
C Rushworth	342	11	3-20	31.09
G Onions	174	5	2-18	34.80
DM Benkenstein	86	5	2-14	17.20
SG Borthwick	66	4	3-19	16.50
ID Blackwell	187	4	2-30	46.75

● **JAMES Vince ended the t20 qualifying campaign as one of the top 10 runscorers.**

Most Runs

	Inns	NO	Rns	HS	Ave
AB McDonald (Le)	14	6	510	96*	63.75
MJ Guptill (Dy)	14	0	476	79	34.00
SC Moore (La)	15	2	475	76	36.53
AC Voges (Nt)	15	0	470	74	31.33
AD Hales (Nt)	15	0	466	76	31.06
ME Trescothick (Sm)	13	3	460	108*	46.00
WTS Porterfield (Wk)	14	0	437	83	31.21
AN Petersen (Gm)	15	2	423	72	32.53
AW Gale (Yor)	13	0	418	67	32.15
JM Vince (Ham)	**14**	**3**	**413**	**85***	**37.54**
Azhar Mahmood (Kent)	13	2	394	106*	35.81
TC Smith (La)	14	3	392	75	35.63
TL Maynard (Sy)	13	4	392	76	43.55
MH Wessels (Nt)	15	0	386	76	25.73
HJH Marshall (Gs)	15	0	367	102	24.46

● **ONLY five players took more t20 qualifying group wickets than Hampshire's Dimi Mascarenhas.**

Most Wickets

	Rns	Wkts	BB	Ave
TJ Phillips (Es)	344	26	4-22	13.23
HF Gurney (Le)	320	22	3-25	14.54
DJ Pattinson (Nt)	371	22	5-25	16.86
TG Southee (Es)	417	22	6-16	18.95
RM Pyrah (Yor)	417	21	5-16	19.85
D Mascarenhas	**296**	**20**	**3-19**	**14.80**
CJ Liddle (Sx)	344	20	4-20	17.20
Shakib Al Hasan (Wo)	315	19	4-31	16.57

Thanks, partner!

HAMPSHIRE batsman Neil McKenzie paid tribute to Michael Carberry after their record-breaking partnership at The Rose Bowl.

The third-wicket pair shared a remarkable 523 during this week's LV County Championship stalemate against Yorkshire.

It broke Hampshire's previous highest partnership – the 411 between Teddy Wynyard and Robert Poore in 1899 – and is the third highest for any wicket on English soil as well as being the ninth highest ever, anywhere.

McKenzie was eventually out for 237, but Carberry was on 300 not out in only his third game since blood clots were discovered on his lung when Hampshire declared on 599-3.

McKenzie said: "You don't get involved in these partnerships too often and sharing one with Michael Carberry after what he's been through was really special.

"He's got this saying of Graham Gooch's – "you never have enough" – and that was the theme for the last couple of hours.

"Carbs is one of the hardest workers I know and to achieve what he's done is magnificent. We complemented each other really well and kept looking at the next landmark for the team which kept our focus really nicely."

The partnership was worth 232 when Hampshire began the final day on 291-2.

"We had to take care of the new ball in the morning but to be fair the pitch was really docile," said McKenzie. "When I was feeling like hitting the ball over the top or doing something different I went back to the beginning of the season when the ball was swinging and nipping off the seam and I had four quality bowlers running in at me!

HARD GRAFT: McKenzie, left, and Carberry take a break during their mammoth stand. Picture: Matt Watson

"We don't get on to too many pitches like that, the county season is usually hard work so we just tried not to throw it away.

"It was nice to cash in when conditions suited the batters. We heard the announcer mention something at 400 and when we had 250 one of the youngsters said it would be good to have a 500 partnership.

"I thought 'that would be nice' but I didn't expect it! We were just batting for the team and for one another."

The pitch prepared by Hampshire's groundstaff was the perfect response to the recent deduction of eight points, a penalty imposed for the spin-friendly track used for the recent game against Notts.

"I've got my own opinion on that but whether this one turned out to be a little more docile because of the points we had docked we'll never know," said McKenzie. "But obviously more caution went into the wicket because we didn't want to be docked another eight points."

FIT AGAIN DIMI TURNS HIS EYE TOWARD 2012

Simon Walter
simon.walter@dailyecho.co.uk
CRICKET REPORTER

HE has been plagued by injury for over a year, but Dimi Mascarenhas is determined to play regularly in all competitions for Hampshire next season.

Prior to the Achilles tear he sustained at last year's Indian Premier League, Mascarenhas was a Hampshire regular for more than a decade.

He missed the whole of last season, other than an aborted comeback in the opening game of Hampshire's successful t20 campaign, and he has been restricted to just two Championship matches this season.

But he has been an ever present in Hampshire's t20 campaign and, with 20 wickets at 14 apiece during the group stage, he is the county's leading bowler in the shortest format this season.

His new-ball spell will be a key factor in determining whether Hampshire win tomorrow's quarter-final against Durham and advance to Finals Day at Edgbaston on August 27. But he is determined to play in all forms next year.

"I'm still desperate to play four-day cricket, I definitely haven't given up hope," said Mascarenhas, as he prepared for tomorrow's big game.

"The Achilles is close. I've played a couple [of Championship games] but haven't got through them as well as I'd have liked.

"We only had to bowl once but if we had to bowl a second time I think I'd have struggled a lot. I decided I didn't want to let myself or the rest of the team down by playing and then not being able to bowl."

Mascarenhas has already started a rehabilitation programme designed to get his Achilles ready for a big season next year.

"Another seven to nine months of rehab will get me stronger and fitter, it's just a case of managing it as well as I can," he said.

"Just to be playing again is a great effort from me, the physio the support staff and the doctors – it was a massive operation.

"But now I'm playing again I want to play more and more.

"I'll know by April next year whether I'm able to play [Championship cricket] again so we'll just have to wait and see.

"The rehab won't stop, it's full on and has been since my last four-day game [against Worcestershire six weeks ago] so aside from the Achilles, I'm strong and fit.

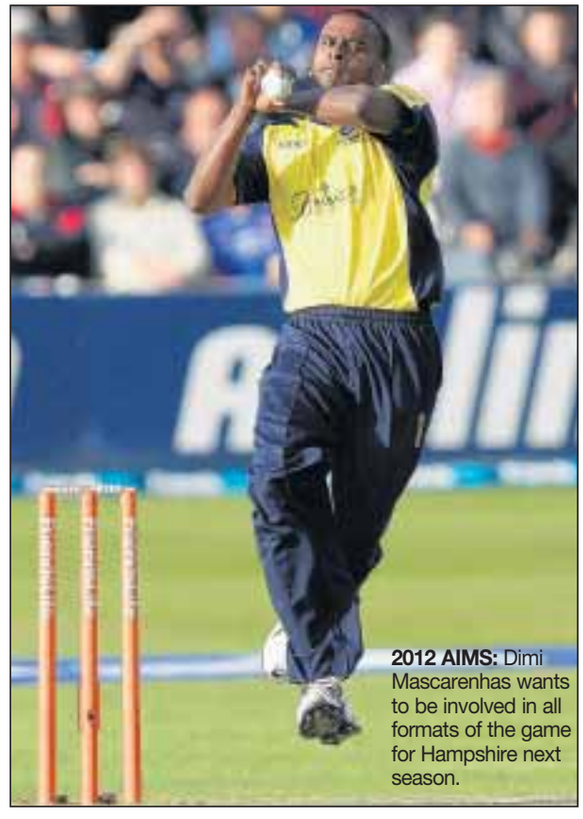
"That game at Worcester, I bowled 28 overs and felt good, it's just the Achilles didn't feel too good.

"If I can get that right I'll be able to go on for a few more seasons yet, touch wood.

"But there are nine months before I have to make any decisions on that."

Even if he does not play Championship cricket again, Mascarenhas does not expect to become a Twenty20 freelancer.

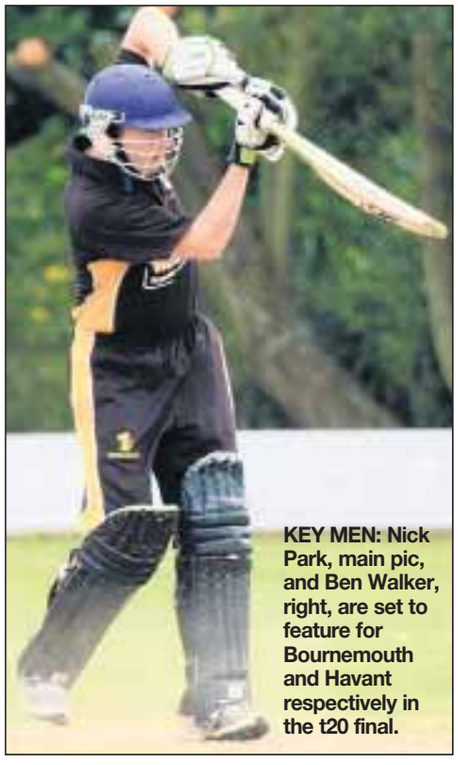
"Where I'm at I can't see myself playing all over the world – there are a lot better, more high-profile players than me," he added.



2012 AIMS: Dimi Mascarenhas wants to be involved in all formats of the game for Hampshire next season.

Local Cricket Spotlight

Big guns take aim for t20 showdown



KEY MEN: Nick Park, main pic, and Ben Walker, right, are set to feature for Bournemouth and Havant respectively in the t20 final.

BOURNEMOUTH'S Southern Electric Twenty20 Cup showdown against Havant under the Hampshire Rose Bowl floodlights on Tuesday evening (7pm) has all the ingredients of being the best final yet.

The finalists are arguably the top two clubs in the Premier League and have plenty of talent to grace the occasion, *writes MIKE VIMPANY*.

Bournemouth have been there and done it, of course.

Their 2009 Southern Electric triumph over Totton & Eling brought the ultimate climax at Derby a month or so later, when they were crowned ECB Cockspur t20 club champions and got a free holiday in Barbados in the bargain.

Despite parading seven of that cup winning side, they are possibly the underdogs on Tuesday night, if anything because of Havant's awesome batting firepower and quality in the spin bowling department.

Openers Steve Dean and Scott Mills (who also played for Bournemouth at Derby) have the capability of taking an attack apart in the short form of the game.

Beneath them lies a wealth of run making potential in the shape of Richard Hindley, Ben Walker and Chris Morgan.

Pete Hopson and Stuart Ransley were listed eight and nine in the batting order against Lymington in the semi-final!

That said, Bournemouth are a well oiled t20 unit, with Nick Park a vital cog at the top of the order.

They too have plenty to offer in the batting department, with Matt Metcalfe's rare presence in a t20 match an undoubted boost on Tuesday night.

Bowling-wise, Havant will use three spinners to follow Ben Walker and Jez Ord.

Simon Watkins is Bournemouth's solitary 'slow man' so their ploy will generally be to go with medium-pace.

It's the second time the clubs have met in the t20 final – Havant winning the 2003 showdown, when Bournemouth collapsed after Richard Scott and Australia ODI batsman Adam Voges had put them in the driving seat.

Tuesday's final will have all the colour and flair of a big twenty20 occasion, with Bournemouth playing in their traditional black with gold trim strip, and Havant in cherry and yellow.

There's music, hot food, licensed bars and a cracking cricket match – and it's all for free!

The winners go through to the regional qualifying rounds of the ECB's Barbados Cockspur Rum twenty20 competition at Guildford next Sunday.

Kent winners Bexley, Sussex Premier League champions Preston Nomads and Valley End, the Guildford-based Surrey t20 cup winners, will provide the opposition.

Bournemouth: Simon Watkins (captain), Nick Park, Mark House, James Park, Mike Porter, Alex Butler, Chris Ridley, Simon Ridley, Pete Smith, Matt Metcalfe, Lynton Staniford.

Havant: Richard Hindley (captain), Steve Dean, Scott Mills, Ben Walker, Chris Morgan, Tim Jackson, Jeremy Bulled, Pete Hopson, Stuart Ransley, Steven Matthews, Jeremy Ord.

Youngster Porter is top of the charts

TEENAGER Michael Porter will become the ECB Southern Electric Premier League's youngest ever Cricketer of the Month award winner when he collects his prize before Tuesday's twenty20 Cup final at the Rose Bowl.

The 16-year old Poole Grammar School student won the July silver salver after hitting 229 runs last month, including three half-centuries.

Porter, pictured, made an unbeaten 75 at Bashley (Rydal), and separate scores of 64 in Bournemouth's matches against Andover and South Wilts.

He has scored almost 600 runs in his debut Premier League season – no mean feat for the West Parley youngster who began the summer sweating on GCSE examinations.

Former Hampshire cricketer Derek Kenway gets the Division 2 award after fronting-up Burridge's brave battle to avoid relegation.

Among his 317-run tally, Kenway hit an unbeaten 144 to underpin an amazing run chase against Hook & Newnham Basics, and made two other scores of fifty or more for Burridge against Bournemouth II (67) and Hambledon (70) – besides taking nine wickets!

Sparsholt's Lewis Dunford claims the Division 3 prize after equally fine performances in the Winchester club's successful bid to pull clear of relegation.

The trio will receive their awards from Southern Electric's Sponsorship Manager, Huw Lock, before Tuesday's Southern Electric twenty20 Cup final at the Rose Bowl, which starts at 7pm.

Leading individual performances – Premier Division - Batting: David Taylor (Alton) 581, Ben Walker (Havant) 569, Eddie Abel (South Wilts) 532, Peter Hopson (Havant) 509, Simon Steel (Totton & Eling) 491, Darren Cowley (Lymington) 482, Benny Howell (Totton & Eling) 465, Richard Morris (Bashley Rydal) 465, Rob Gibson (Academy) 442, Tom Morton (South Wilts) 439, Jake George (Academy) 424, Will Prozesky (Andover) 409, James Park (Bournemouth) 404. **Bowling:** Matt Metcalfe (Bournemouth) 30, Jamie Miller (Academy/Bashley Rydal) 26, David Taylor (Alton) 25, Richard Hindley (Havant) 24, Matt Ireson (Alton) 23, Ben Walker (Havant) 22, Matt Perry-Lewis (St Cross Symondians) 22, Jordan Finney (St Cross Symondians) 22, Jake Lilley (Bashley-Rydal) 21, Kevin Nash (Bashley-Rydal) 21. **Wicketkeeping:** Dan Friedman (Bashley-Rydal) 24, Mark Heffernan (Alton) 19, Tom Morton (South Wilts) 18, Jez Bulled (Havant) 16, Rob Lammiman (Lymington) 15, Lewis McManus (Academy) 13, Charlie Cooke (St Cross Symondians) 11.

Division 2 - Batting: Derek Kenway (Burridge) 625, * Cole McConchie (Ventnor) 539, David Lloyd (Rowledge) 485, James Moon (Portsmouth) 430, Ben Thane (Hook & NB) 413, Adam Hose (Ventnor) 409, * Tristen McDonald (Rowledge) 405, James Wright (Portsmouth) 402. **Bowling:** Dan Hewitt (Hambledon) 21, James Wright (Portsmouth) 20, * David Williams (Hambledon) 20, Shane Brewer (Hook & NB) 20, James Scott (Portsmouth) 19, * Cole McConchie (Ventnor) 18, Rob Smith (Rowledge) 18, Mark Teale (Hartley Wintney) 18, Tony Richman (Paultons) 18, Roger Miller (Ventnor) 17, Ryan Beck (New Milton) 17. **Wicketkeeping:** Richard Norris (Hartley Wintney) 20, Rob O'Brien (Paultons) 18, Freddie Dare (Portsmouth) 17, Mark Whyte (Ventnor) 17, * Josh Hill (New Milton) 17.

Division 3 - Batting: George Marshall (United Servies) 804, David Banks (Sarisbury Athletic) 527, Brent Jarvis-Spinks (Fareham & Crofton) 519, Kevin Light (Fareham & Crofton) 455, Peter Hammond (Sarisbury Athletic) 455, Archie Norris (Sarisbury Athletic) 452, Paul Marks (Fawley) 416, Mickey Butler (Tichborne Park) 402. **Bowling:** David Banks (Sarisbury Athletic) 25, Dan Goldstraw (Totton & Eling II) 25, Jamie Donaldson (Trojans) 25, Mickey Butler (Tichborne Park) 23, Kevin Light (Fareham & Crofton) 22, James Ingram (Sarisbury Athletic) 22, Tom Allam (Tichborne Park) 22, Anirban Baul (Liphook & Ripsley) 21, Mike West (Calmore Sports) 20, Steve Wright (Sparsholt) 20. **Wicketkeeping:** Darren Vann (Calmore Sports) 19, Chris Gates (Bashley-Rydal II) 18, * Kane Burgess (Tichborne Park) 17, * Stuart Martin (Fair Oak) 16.

Sarisbury close in on Div 3 title

SARISBURY Athletic are looking to home in on the Southern Electric Premier League Division 3 title after beating Old Tauntonians & Romsey in last weekend's top of the table clash at Allotment Road.

It gave them a five-point lead at the top going into a home straight, which sees Sarisbury play relegation threatened Hursley Park, Trojans and Totton & Eling II after today's potentially tricky visit to Sparsholt.

With five newcomers recruited from Premier Division clubs, Sarisbury were starting favourites to win the championship – a tag they've lived up to with only Liphook & Ripsley having beaten them so far.

SARISBURY ATHLETIC: Back row, left to right: David Banks, Archie Norris, Adam Sharp, Simon Orr, Andy Reading and James Ingram. Front: Sam Floyd, Matt Journeaux, Peter Hammond, Mark Miller and Paul Jewell.

TURN TO PAGES 44-45 FOR MORE LOCAL CRICKET

Local Cricket Spotlight

Dale drops in on P&S

PORTSMOUTH & Southsea had an unexpected visitor at their County Division One match with Compton & Chandler's Ford – none other than South Africa paceman Dale Steyn!

The Proteas pace ace, pictured, is a friend of P&S all-rounder Dave Upton and his presence clearly rubbed off on the Southsea youngsters, who celebrated a five-wicket win.

Andy Gorty's 71 helped CCF to 230-8 – teenager Alex Fletcher taking 4-62 to regain pole position in the County 1 wicket taking charts.

Compton were literally blasted by a boundary-strewn 76 by Joe Collings-Wells, who teed off from ball one.

Jack Davies (48) and Matt Benfield (50) swept P&S home and to a place in the top half of the table.

Noble keeps the top spot

LANGLEY Manor skipper Graham Noble, pictured, remains County Division One's top batsman with 617 runs.

Portsmouth & Southsea youngster Alex Fletcher leads a tight wicket race, with 29 victims – one more than Midhurst's Tim Powell.

Leading performers -
Batting: Graham Noble (Langley Manor) 617, Leeland Zeller (Gosport Borough) 550, Lee Harrop (Gosport Borough) 496, Alex Shephard (Waterlooville) 474, Steve Harris (Langley Manor) 458, Craig Stares (Gosport Borough) 407, Curtis Locke (Portchester) 358, Jamie Hall (Midhurst) 341, Alex Richardson (Locks Heath) 331, Jo Cranch (Idlers) 331, Jamie Mitchell (Purbrook) 323, Cameron Mitchell (Ryde) 300, Jon Dow (Alton II) 297, Andy Pearce (Alton II) 287, Scott Jones (Locks Heath) 287, Matt Hardy (Cadnam) 284, Lawrence Tolfrey (Ryde) 283, Alan Mengham (Purbrook) 282, Chaz Sheppard (Idlers) 250.
Bowling: Alex Fletcher (P & S) 29, Tim Powell (Midhurst) 28, Graham Noble (Langley Manor) 27, Leeland Zeller (Gosport Borough) 26, Hamish Blomfield (Langley Manor) 24, Martin Clements (Idlers) 21, Matt Bashford (Locks Heath) 21, Matt Maiden (Cadnam) 20.

THE RACE FOR THE COUNTY 1 TITLE

THE TOP FIVE'S REMAINING FIXTURES
Waterlooville: Purbrook (a), Locks Heath (h), Lymington II (a), Cadnam (a).
Gosport Borough: Ellingham (a), Ryde (h), Purbrook (a), Locks Heath (h).
Locks Heath: Lymington II (a), Waterlooville (a), Cadnam (h), Gosport Borough (a).
Langley Manor: Portchester (h), Alton II (a), Portsmouth & Southsea (h), Shrewton (a).
Midhurst: Idlers (h), Compton & CF (h), Bedhampton (a), Andover II (h).

	P	W	T	L	Pts	Av
Waterlooville	10	8	1	1	205	20.50
Gosport Borough	11	9	0	2	217	19.73
Locks Heath	11	9	0	2	211	19.18
Langley Manor	11	8	0	3	208	18.91
Midhurst	10	7	0	3	180	18.00
Alton II	11	8	0	3	195	17.73
Portsmouth & S'sea	12	5	0	7	160	13.33
Lymington II	11	4	1	6	146	13.27
Idlers	10	4	1	5	132	13.20
Purbrook	12	5	0	7	149	12.42
Andover II	10	3	2	5	124	12.40
Ellingham	10	4	0	6	123	12.30
Bedhampton	10	4	0	6	119	11.90
Ryde	11	4	0	7	129	11.73
Portchester	9	2	1	6	105	11.67
Shrewton	10	3	0	7	107	10.70
Compton & C Ford	11	3	0	8	113	10.27
Cadnam	10	2	0	8	91	9.10

SEND OFF: Modrapheniacs Scooter Club provide a cavalcade for the funeral procession of Hythe & Dibden Cricket Club legend Tony Wood.

Club says a final farewell to Tony

HYTHE & Dibden Cricket Club said goodbye to the man described as the "heart and soul of the club" this week at the funeral for former chairman Tony Wood, who passed away last month at the age of 44.

Wood, pictured right in his playing days, joined the club in 1994 as a wicket-keeper/batsman, but a motorcycle accident brought a premature end to his playing career.

However, he remained ever present at the club in a multitude of roles, ranging from non-playing chairman and scorer to groundsman and manager of a third men's team to accommodate the products of the club's burgeoning colts set-up.

Wood's friend, Hythe & Dibden CC secretary Steve Chiverton, said: "Woody was the heart and soul of this club and will be sadly missed by us all.

"He was such a popular bloke that more than 500 people turned up for his funeral, which was so many that they couldn't all fit in the church.

"Anyone connected with the club – from current players, to older members and even the young colts we have coming through the system – will have been touched by his kindness at some point and it was really fitting to see so many of them turn up and pay their respects in that way."

Wood's other great love, besides cricket, was scooters and a cavalcade of riders from the New Forest's Modrapheniacs Scooter Club provided a guard of honour for the service at Wessex Vale Crematorium, Hedge End.

Hampshire title is in Heath's hands

LOCKS Heath hold the key to the Hampshire League championship race, *writes MIKE VIMPANY*.

With four matches to go, they trail Waterlooville and Gosport Borough in the chase for the title, but they still have to play the pair.

The third-placed Heathens visit the Ville next week and Gosport on the final day of the season.

Waterlooville went into the home strait with an eight-point advantage over Gosport Borough and 14 ahead of Locks Heath.

They brushed Ryde aside without too much bother – only Don Gordon (44) providing much resistance in a disappointing 123 (Sam Hillman 4-22) before Chris Baumann (50) and John Hudson (43) polished off the target.

The six-wicket defeat inflicted at Privett Park has probably ended Midhurst's title prospects, though the West Sussex club don't have a terribly demanding run-in.

The result did, however, boost Gosport's chances of silverware – Andrew Blomerus (3-27) and Tom Larner (3-10) combining to bowl Midhurst out for 153 (Jamie Hall 79).

Once Mike Rees (39) and Lee Harrop (39) eased Borough to 79-0, the outcome was not in doubt.

ALI CHEYNE

Gosport lost four wickets getting the runs. Nalinda Premachandra took 3-34 but, significantly for Alex Fletcher & Co chasing the CD1 bowling award, Tim Powell returned home wicketless.

Locks Heath remained in touch, overcoming a batting collapse before beating Purbrook by 70 runs at Warsash Road.

The Heathens fell apart after a promising start by the Boyd brothers, Chris (39) and Michael (41), with Jamie Mitchell taking 3-20 and Sean Figgins snapping up four catches. Purbrook's batsmen fared no better, with only Aaron Dean (36) surviving as Jack Paskins cut through the lower-order with a 5-8 return.

Fourth placed Langley Manor will be disappointed if they slip up in any of their four remaining games.

They beat Lymington comfortably enough, with Graham Noble (3-23), Hamish Blomfield (3-30) and Craig Renders (3-38) bowling the visitors out for 190.

Mark 'Kiwi' Newton (62) top scored for Lymington.

Once Noble (47) and Stevie Harris (43) got into their stride, the Manor were on their way. Ali Cheyne's 42 not out clinched it.

Alton II's promotion shout ended with a 65-run defeat by Bedhampton, who have rid themselves of the perils of relegation after four straight wins.

Their recent good run appeared likely to end when Patrick Sampson (3-25) and Darren Augustus (3-32) reduced the visitors to 93-7.

But Martin Hovey (61) and Steve Gardiner (36) improved Bedhampton's lot to such an extent they were able to defend 178-7.

And defend it they did – Alton's batting crumbling to 113 all out (Augustus 30), with Alan Gardiner taking 5-21.

Matt Vail was the star of Ellingham's crushing 138-run win over Cadnam, who now seem destined for the drop.

Aided by Mark Burrett (49), Vail scored a fine 94 to help Ellingham post 252-8.

His work didn't end there as Vail switched to his off-spin bowling and, with Burrett (3-15) his partner again, took 4-7 as Cadnam crashed to 114 all out.

Idlers came out on top in the Wiltshire derby with Shrewton, who will probably put their immediate CD1 future on the line at Compton & Chandler's Ford today.

Former Canford all-rounder Ben Upton (4-35) and Chris Warde (4-41) did the damage as Shrewton were dismissed for 159 – a total the Idlers, using the Larkhill Garrison ground for the first time, duly polished off without too much fuss.

The Andover II-Portchester affair at London Road ended in a tie, with both sides scoring 167.

James Knight (3-32) and Dave Webb (3-43) reduced Portchester to 167 all out – Charlie Coward (49) giving the innings a late boost.

Andover were on a winner while Harry Blackburn (54) remained at the crease, but Coward (3-24) and spinner Tom Adams (2-8) took late wickets to tie the scores.

MORE LOCAL CRICKET IN MONDAY'S *DAILY ECHO*

Local Cricket Spotlight

LINE-UP: Winchester & District under-15s

LINE-UP: North Hants under-15s

FOREST TAKE U15 HONOURS

THE New Forest emulated their recent success at Under-14 level by carrying off the Hampshire Cricket Board Under-15 District title at this week's New Milton-based festival, *writes MIKE VIMPANY*.

They won all three matches, thus completing four wins out of five overall, beating South East Hants by 75 runs, North Hants by three wickets after a massive run chase, and Winchester & District by an 11-run margin.

The New Forest made 172 against SE Hants, with Wellow & Plaitford's James Sampson (54), pictured right, and New Milton's own Toby Edwards (27) top scoring. SE Hants were well poised at 83-1 but collapsed sensationally to 102 all out against Aiden Batten (4-16) and Charlie Field (4-8).

But it wasn't all that straightforward for the Forest, whose bowlers were put to the sword by North Hants pair Ollie Burland (69) and Max Watkins (65) in a 142-run opening stand.

NE Hants finished with 272 – a total the New Forest chased down!

Openers Adam Drodge (42) and Toby Edwards (28) got the Forest off to a flying 68-run start, which Charlie Field (50) and Joe Welch (27) extended.

Zac Millar (26*) and Josh Kennedy (18*) finished off an amazing run chase.

It was winner-take-all when the New Forest met Winchester in their final match – and it proved a predictably close run affair between the two top sides.

New Forest found themselves in a spot of bother and lost early wickets before James Sampson (69) and some aggressive batting from Zac Millar (45) saw them post a respectable total of 220.

Winchester got off to a good start with their openers sharing a partnership of 96 before Julian Drake made a breakthrough.

Some excellent bowling from James Holgate (2-31), coupled with some truly outstanding fielding, saw Winchester dismissed for 209, giving Forest victory by 11 runs.

The New Forest boys will receive their medals prior to the Southern Electric t20 final at the Rose Bowl on Tuesday evening.

LINE-UP: New Forest under-15s

LINE-UP: South East Hants under 15s.

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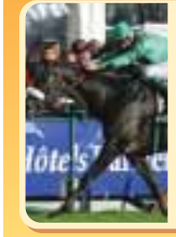

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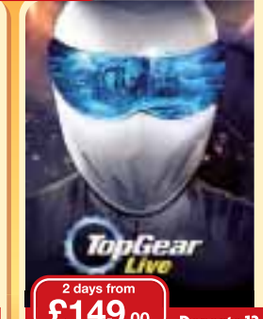

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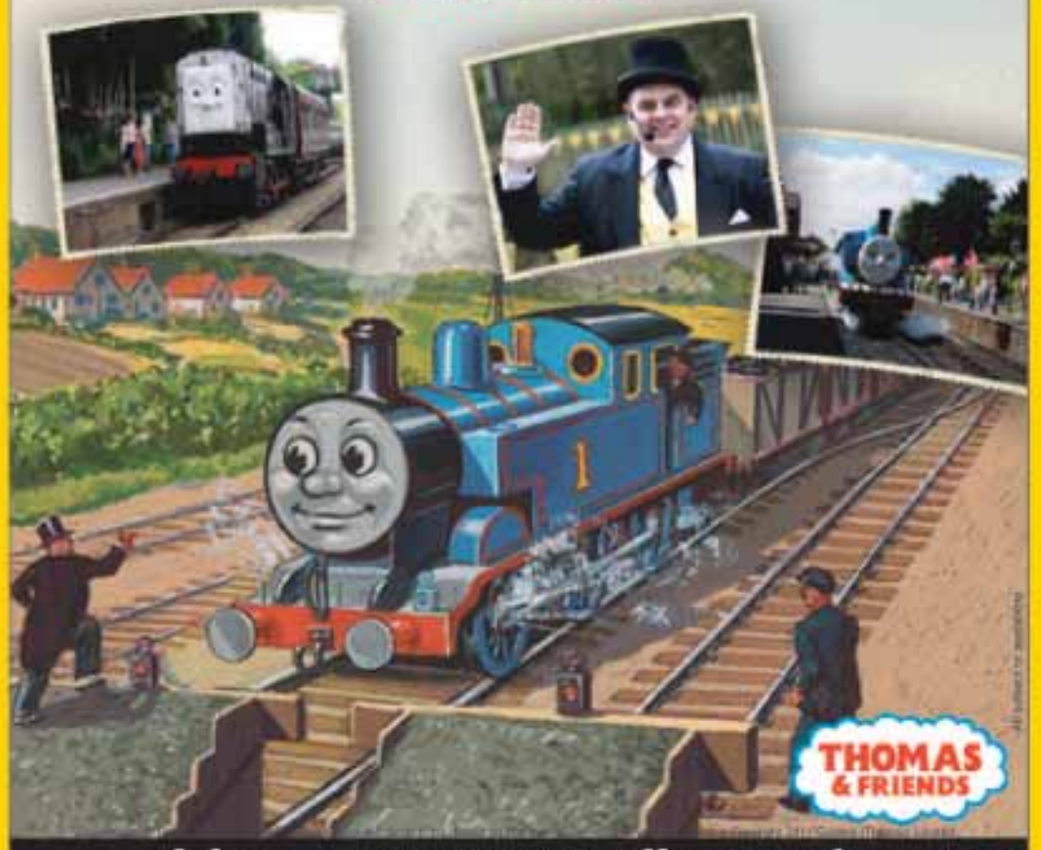

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11 Sept : Loire Valley 6 Day	£529
12 Sept : Heart of Snowdonia 5 day	£309
12 Sept : Torquay Steam & Sail 5 day	£257
13 Sept : Costa Brava - Roses 10 day	£619
14 Sept : Brittany 7 day	£529
16 Sept : Sidmouth - The Jurassic Coast 5 day	£364
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npower Championship

Brighton L Doncaster L
Buckley 83 — Sharp 39
HT 0-1 — Att 20,219

Bristol C 0 Ipswich 3
Chopra 13,60
Martin 51
HT 0-1 — Att 13,107

Burnley 2 Watford 2
Austin 77 — Forsyth 45
Treacy 84 — Yeates 70
HT 0-1 — Att 14,617

Coventry 0 Leicester 1
Peltier 52
HT 0-0 — Att 21,102

Derby Cty 2 Birminghm 1
Shackell 26 — Davies 19
S Davies 42
HT 2-1 — Att 27,210

Hull P Blackpool P

Middlesbro 2 POMPEY 2
Emnes 24 — Norris 47
Williams 54 — Varney 90
HT 1-0 — Att 18,196

Nottm For 0 Barnsley 0
HT 0-0 — Att 22,951

Peterboro 2 Crystal P 1
McCann 58 — Scannell 33
Ball 73
HT 0-1 — Att 11,604

Reading 2 Millwall 2
Manset 86,89 — Henderson 49
Marquis 62
HT 0-0 — Att 18,531

SAINTS L Leeds Utd L
HT L-L

West Ham P Cardiff P

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Ipswich	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
Derby Cty	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Peterboro	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Blackpool	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Leicester	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Burnley	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Middlesbro	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Millwall	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
POMPEY	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**1**
Reading	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Watford	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
Barnsley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Nottm For	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Brighton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cardiff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Doncaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leeds Utd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SAINTS	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
West Ham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Birminghm	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Crystal P	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Coventry	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hull	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bristol C	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

npower League One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Charlton	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Notts Cnty	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
Colchester	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	2	3
Brentford	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sheff Utd	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Sheff Wed	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Tranmere	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Walsall	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Hartlepool	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
M K Dons	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bury	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
Huddersfld	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Scunthorpe	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
Wycombe	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Exeter	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Stevenage	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Chesterfld	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Leyton O	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Preston	1	0	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oldham	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rochdale	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Yeovil	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
CHERRIES	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**3**	**0**
Carlisle	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0

Brentford 2 Yeovil 0
Alexander 30 pen
Logan 76
HT 1-0 — Att 6,278

Carlisle 0 Notts Cnty 3
J Hughes 13
Zoko 32 og
L Hughes 45
HT 0-3 — Att 5,941

Charlton 3 CHERRIES 0
Stephens 23,51
Jackson 77 pen
HT 1-0

Huddersfld 1 Bury1
Roberts 65 — Lowe 76
HT 0-0 — Att 13,873

M K Dons 2 Hartlepool 2
Chadwick 53 — Boyd 20
Ibehre 90 — Poole 85
HT 0-1 — Att 7,287

Oldham 0 Sheff Utd 2
Maguire 48
Cresswell 54
HT 0-0 — Att 8,032

Preston 2 Colchester 4
Mellor 60 — Wordsworth 12
Coutts 70 — Henderson 49,65
Odejayi 76
HT 0-1 — Att 11,451

Sheff Wed 2 Rochdale 0
R Jones 16
Prutton 72
HT 1-0 — Att 21,174

Stevenage 0 Exeter 0
HT 0-0 — Att 3,829

Tranmere 1 Chesterfld 0
Weir 74
HT 0-0 — Att 5,755

Walsall 1 Leyton O 0
Chambers 21
HT 1-0 — Att 4,753

Wycombe 1 Scunthorpe 1
Tunnicliffe 23 — Nelson 40
HT 1-1 — Att 4,451

npower League Two

AFC Wimbledon 2 Bristol R 3
Stuart 39 — McGleish 17
Ademeno 68 — Harrold 20
Virgo 85 pen
HT 1-2 — Att 4,629

Bradford 1 Aldershot 2
Hanson 90 — Hylton 18
Threlfall 38 og
HT 0-2 — Att 10,205

Gillingham 1 Cheltnham 0
Montrose 26
HT 1-0 — Att 5,360

Macclesfld 0 Dagenham 1
Elito 60
HT 0-0 — Att 1,566

Morecambe 0 Barnet 1
Byrne 76
HT 0-0 — Att 1,874

Northmptn 0 Acc Stanley 0
HT 0-0 — Att 4,621

Port Vale 2 Crawley 2
Richards 42 — Barnett 39
Dodds 90 — McFadzean 51
HT 1-1 — Att 5,889

Rotherham 1 Oxford Utd 0
Grabban 48
HT 0-0 — Att 4,484

Shrewsbry 1 Plymouth 1
Collins 69 — Fletcher 90
HT 0-0 — Att 6,421

Southend 1 Hereford 0
Mohsni 14
HT 1-0 — Att 5,105

Swindon 3 Crewe 0
Kennedy 45 pen
Risser 63
Flint 77
HT 1-0 — Att 8,248

Torquay 2 Burton Albion 2
Howe 59 — Richards 49,53
Mansell 81
HT 0-0 — Att 3,142

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Swindon	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Bristol R	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	3
Aldershot	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	3
Barnet	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Dagenham	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Gillingham	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Rotherham	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Southend	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Burton Albion	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
Crawley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
Port Vale	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Torquay	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Plymouth	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
Shrewsbry	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Acc Stanley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Northmptn	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
AFC Wimb'don	1	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bradford	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cheltnham	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Hereford	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Macclesfld	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morecambe	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oxford Utd	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Crewe	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0

Clydesdale Bank Premier

Aberdeen P Celtic P

Dundee Utd 1 St Mirren 1
Daly 67 — Thompson 11
HT 0-1

Dunfrmline 3 Inverness CT 3
Kirk 26,52 — Tansey 46,83
Hardie 90 — Hayes 76
HT 1-0 — Att 3,378

Hibernian P St Johnstn P
Postponed.

Rangers P Kilmarnock P
Postponed.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Dundee Utd	3	0	2	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	5
St Mirren	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	5
Motherwell	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
Rangers	2	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	4
Celtic	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Hibernian	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	3
Dunfrmline	2	0	2	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	2
Kilmarnock	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	2
Hearts	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Aberdeen	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
St Johnstn	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1
Inverness CT	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	3	6	1

SAINTS' Dean Hammond, right, celebrates making it 1-0 with Jose Fonte during the match against Leeds United in the npower Championship at St. Mary's.

Scottish Division One

Ayr Utd 1 Hamilton 2
McGowan 8 — McLaughlin 29,57
HT 1-1 — Att 1,750

Livingston 2 Queen Sth 2
Sinclair 56 — McLaughlin 19
Russell 85 pen — Brighton 32
HT 0-2 — Att 1,444

Partick 0 Dundee 1
Lockwood 90 pen
HT 0-0 — Att 3,065

Raith 1 Falkirk 0
Hamill 45
HT 1-0 — Att 2,695

Ross Cnty 0 Morton 0
HT 0-0 — Att 2,249

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Hamilton	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	3
Dundee	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3
Raith	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Livingston	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
Queen Sth	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
Morton	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ross Cnty	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ayr Utd	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Falkirk	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Partick	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Scottish Division Two

Airdrie Utd 3 Dumbarton 0
Johnston 6,63
Donnelly 9
HT 2-0 — Att 887

Arbroath 6 Albion R 2
Sheerin 7 pen,58 pen — Boyle 31,37
Sibanda 29
Malcolm 46
McAnespie 51
Bryce 80
HT 2-2 — Att 661

Brechin 2 Stenhsmuir 0
McKenna 71
McManus 80
HT 0-0 — Att 442

Forfar 2 Cowdenbth 2
McCulloch 58 — Ramsay 11
Templeman 62 pen — Coult 78
HT 0-1 — Att 469

Stirling A 1 East Fife 0
Davieson 76
HT 0-0 — Att 688

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Arbroath	1	1	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Airdrie Utd	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Brechin	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Stirling A	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Cowdenbth	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1
Forfar	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
East Fife	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Stenhsmuir	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Dumbarton	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0
Albion R	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	6	0

Scottish Division Three

Annan Athletic 5 Queens Park 2
Cox 32 — Smith 18,27
Bell 45
Gibson 59,65
Sloan 62
HT 2-2 — Att 511

Clyde 2 Peterhead 0
Sweeney 45
McDonald 75
HT 1-0 — Att 711

E Stirling 1 Montrose 0
Jackson 79 pen
HT 0-0 — Att 282

Elgin 4 Berwick 1
Gunn 17,20 pen,51,70 — Currie 84
HT 2-0 — Att 534

Stranraer 2 Alloa 3
Aitken 17 — R McCord 2 pen
Winter 35 — Gordon 59
Cawley 84
HT 2-1 — Att 306

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
	HOME						AWAY					
Annan Athle	1	1	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Elgin	1	1	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Clyde	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Alloa	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	3
E Stirling	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Stranraer	1	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montrose	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Peterhead	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Queens Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	0
Berwick	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	0

Friendlies

Altrncham L Stockport L
HT L-L

Benfica L Arsenal L
HT L-L

Boston 3 Lincoln City 4
HT -

Hibernian L Sunderlnd L
HT L-L

Kilmarnock L Blackburn L
HT L-L

Liverpool L Valencia L
HT L-L

Newcastle A Fiorentina A
HT 0-0
Abandoned after 63 minutes due to heavy rain.

Norwich 3 Parma 0
Holt 34
Surman 62,87
HT 1-0 — Att 13,067

Rangers L Chelsea L
HT L-L

Swansea 1 Real Betis 0
Graham 63
HT 0-0

Spurs L Ath Bilbao L
HT L-L

Wolves 2 Real Zrgza 0
Elokobi 60
Fletcher 66
HT 0-0 — Att 11,069

York L Bolton L
HT L-L

Grey panels indicate High-scoring games

Friendlies

Daniel Sturridge's first-half double helped Chelsea to a comfortable victory over Rangers in their friendly match at Ibrox.

Light Blues' striker Nikica Jelavic headed the Scottish champions into the lead after six minutes after being set up by Steven Naismith.

However, Sturridge - who spent the second half of last season on loan to Bolton - struck twice to give the classy Londoners an interval lead which they never looked like surrendering.

Substitute Florent Malouda, who had replaced Sturridge on the hour mark, headed in Chelsea's third in the 72nd minute to emphasise the gap in class between the two sides.

The scoreline could have been worse for the home side had substitute goalkeeper Neil Alexander, on for Allan McGregor at the interval, not saved Frank Lampard's penalty two minutes later.

David Goodwillie scored on his Blackburn debut as the Barclays Premier League side signed off their pre-season preparations with a comfortable 4-1 win over Kilmarnock at Rugby Park.

The Scottish international had not even trained with his new colleagues following his move from Dundee United to Rovers on Wednesday.

Grant Hanley's own goal gave the Clydesdale Bank Premier League side the lead after 10 minutes, David Dunn immediately levelled from the penalty spot after Killie's Patrick Ada handled a cross and Jason Roberts gave the visitors the lead soon after. Roberts also converted a 31st-minute penalty after being fouled in the box.

Danny Graham grabbed his first goal for Swansea as Brendan Rodgers' side rounded off their pre-season preparations with victory over Real Betis at the Liberty Stadium.

The £3.5million former Watford man performed a lovely turn from an Angel Rangel pass to loft the ball into the net in the 63rd minute and settle the contest.

Norwich completed their pre-season friendly schedule with a comfortable 3-0 win over Parma at Carrow Road.

A close-range effort from captain Grant Holt and a second half brace by winger Andrew Surman saw the Canaries warm up for next weekend's Premier League opener at Wigan with a confident display in front of a 13,000 crowd.

George Elokobi and Steven Fletcher scored in the space of five minutes midway through the second half to give Wolves a 2-0 win over Real Zaragoza at Molineux.

Sunderland were held to a goalless draw by Hibernian at Easter Road, while Newcastle's match against Fiorentina at St James' Park was abandoned by referee Mark Halsey in the 64th minute because of a waterlogged pitch - there had been no breakthrough at the time.

POOLS CHECK

Match		
1	L	1
2	1	1
3	3●	1
4	1	2
5	1	1
6	2	2
7	3●	1
8	2	2
9	1	1
10	3●	2
11	L	L
12	L	L
13	1	1
14	1	1
15	1	1
16	3●	2
17	3●	1
18	1	2
19	1	1
20	1	1
21	2	2
22	1	2
23	1	1
24	3●	3●
25	1	1
26	1	1
27	1	1
28	1	2
29	1	2
30	2	2
31	3●	3●
32	1	2
33	3●	2
34	1	1
35	1	1
36	3●	2
37	L	L
38	3●	1
39	3●	1
40	L	L
41	1	3●
42	3●	1
43	1	2
44	1	1
45	2	2
46	1	1
47	1	3●
48	1	2
49	3●	1

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